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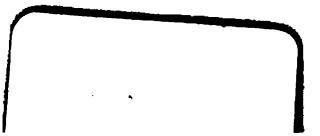
The WILD HEART

By Emma-Lindsay Squier

Introduction by
GENE STRATTON-PORTER

KD 17436



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to Marie Nuse

from

Mrs M. G. Dart

Verona N.J. Aug 1924

"Pictures are windows to many lands,
But a book is a door that ready stands
To him who will open and go outside,
Where the rivers and plains are free
and wide
Pictures are windows thro which we
look,
But the door of the world is just
a book"

The WILD HEART

By

Emma-Lindsay Squier

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GENE STRATTON-PORTER

Illustrations and Decorations by
PAUL BRANSOM

Cosmopolitan Book Corporation
NEW YORK MCMXXII

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DEDICATED TO

BASIL KING

WITH DEEPEST GRATITUDE FOR THE INSPIRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT THROUGH WHICH THE WILD HEART STORIES FOUND WRITTEN EXPRESSION, AND FOR THE TITLE OF THE SERIES WHICH THUS CAME INTO BEING.

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AN INTRODUCTION

Which might better be entitled:

Some Youngsters Find the Wrong Parents

By

Gene Stratton-Porter

INCE "The Wild Heart" is throbbing with the same blood that pulses in the heart of every human being who goes to the fields and woods and fraternizes with the creatures that home there, since the feet that carry a wild heart on its journey are following the same path that a few peculiar feet have made, what they have found and what the heart has

learned is the same thing that similar feet have been finding and hearts have been learning since the beginning of time.

The author of this book pronounces it "very simple, having no literary style or value." Perhaps this estimate indicates modesty on her part, but it is not the truth concerning the book. Thoreau once wrote: "It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak and the other to hear." Those of us who have made our own path through the wilds know the truth when we hear it. The first law that can be laid down concerning any work worthy to be put into the hands of the public is the old law that every writer should write concerning matters of his own personal observation. Whenever any writer follows this old rule, working with sincerity of heart, with inborn insight concerning his chosen subject, following the promptings of a simple human heart, and using a certain facility in the choice of words,

which is a gift of God primarily, that author must evolve good work. Laying down these specifications as law which governs every masterpiece that ever has been produced, it will be observed that "The Wild Heart" follows them as naturally as water flows to the sea, possibly as unconsciously.

To anyone who knows the fields and woods the book carries the conviction of truth. Those who do not know nature will not believe many of these statements, because they have not learned that when one goes into the haunts of the wild calmly, fearlessly, absolutely in tune with Nature, one is perfectly safe. The people who go to fraternize with the free creatures, to learn the secrets of Nature, to protect, to love, to fellowship with the wild, wear an invincible armor.

Enos Mills will tell you that he tramps the Rocky Mountains for weeks at a time absolutely without a weapon. Arthur Heming will tell you that he

travels Canada from side to side, north and south, passing all kinds of wild creatures at all seasons and under any conditions, and nothing touches him.

I can tell you that my face has been within two feet of a coiled rattlesnake ready to strike, but it did not strike. Two minutes later a man antagonistic to the wild passed the same location and immediately the snake disclosed itself and was ready to fight.

Very recently some children playing at the edge of the desert found a scorpion. They coaxed it onto a piece of bark and were carrying it around playing with it. So long as they felt no fear of the creature, it was quiescent in their hands. The instant they carried it among grown people who recognized it and were afraid, the trouble began. When the wild thing entered the atmosphere of fear and was surrounded by the taint of that acid which is exhaled from the body of any human be-

ing experiencing fear, that instant it was on guard and ready to strike.

Any human being carrying in his breast a wild heart knows instinctively how to fraternize with the wild. Anyone carrying a heart of fear and antagonism will have a troubled journey through forest or desert. The writer of this book proves that she carries a wild heart in her breast. Her records are unquestionably true. They are precisely the same things that happen to anyone having a heart in tune with Nature.

So the book passes, first, because it speaks the truth. It needs only that these records should be read to gain an idea of the degree of insight possessed by the writer. The nice comprehension of what the wild is thinking and feeling, the keen perception of the "why" of things, pass the book on the grounds of insight. The simple unassuming manner in which the record is kept

proves it the emanation of a human heart without guile, effervescing love, not only for the beauties of field and forest, but for the living creatures that home there.

It is modest of the writer to say that her book has "no literary style or value," but the book proves the reverse. Throughout will be found the value of truth, the exquisite style of utter simplicity, the best plain common word chosen to tell the plain common story; and it is a very difficult thing always to find the right words with which to tell any story. There are only about twenty thousand words in the English language. When you compare this number with the number of objects existing in the world, the number of ideas that have sprung and will spring in the human brain, it easily can be appreciated that it is sometimes difficult to find the right word by which to express one's meaning clearly and simply; for there always is one word which, better

than any other, will portray a situation or describe an object.

Any author who is actuated by sincerity will always choose the plain simple word which expresses his meaning plainly and simply. The one thing that sets apart the work of any writer is the ability to express himself in plain simple language that common people can understand and appreciate. It was on this subject that Martin Luther once said: "Hebrew, Latin, and Greek I spare until we learned ones come together, and then we make it so curled and finical that God Himself wondereth at us."

That is precisely the reason why nine-tenths of the Nature books written in this country have been failures. They are "so curled and finical" that only the "learned ones" can understand what they are all about.

To me it is an atrocity to tag a bird, a butterfly, or a flower with several inches of Latin or Greek per each.

Every living creature should have a common, simple, descriptive name that a common human being who wants to know what it is can learn and remember. I do truly believe "that God Himself wondereth at us" if He takes the time to look at many of the books to be found in our libraries concerning the most exquisite and beautiful of His creatures.

I believe that any normal man or woman would be intensely interested in the organism of a moth, the delicate parts so beautifully evolved to serve their purpose; but what common person could wade through a large volume crammed from end to end with such terms as *patagia, jugum, discocellulars, phagocytes?* It is such works on Nature that have kept the Nature lovers of many generations out of the fields and woods. They had not the education, the time, nor the inclination to be sufficiently "curled and finical" to be specific. They could take no one speci-

men and learn it, because they could not identify it. In a book such as "The Wild Heart" there is no word that a ten-year-old child can not comprehend; while there is a wonderful beauty and facility in the choice of words, in the sincerity of expression, and the sympathetic insight.

I certainly wish that a copy of this book may go into every home in the world, for two reasons: the first, that men and women may learn how anyone with a sympathetic heart devoid of fear may fraternize with the wild; and for the other very excellent reason that it may do something toward teaching parents that all children are not alike and can not possibly be run through the same groove.

Here and there in a family there is born a child with a wild heart. It is nothing less than a tragedy when such a child is cursed with the wrong parents. God gives to only a few of His children a wild heart, a musical ear,

facile fingers. The man or woman who keeps a child born with the love of the woods in its heart from contact with Nature, who destroys the trust that God placed in its heart, and instils fear bred by man, does a dreadful thing, a thing that must end in disaster. Nature does not reveal her secrets to everyone. Creatures of the wild will not be brothers with any save a very few specially endowed human beings.

To-day my heart sickens at the thought of what would have happened to me if, when I told my Mother I had been talking with the fairies and what they said and did, she had whipped me for not speaking the truth; if, when I came from the woods with my apron torn and soiled, full of dirty specimens, my heart overflowing with the wonders of my discoveries, I had been beaten and forbidden to go again. If we are to have truly great art, literature, or

science in the future, many, perhaps most, of those who are to do the work will be born into this world in simple common homes like the Indiana homes in which the author of "The Wild Heart" and I were born. What we as a nation produce in wonder-work along any creative line in the future is going to depend upon the ability of parents of this generation to recognize and to foster unusual gifts in their children when they first detect them. The mother who whips a child because it happens to have been born with a wild heart does a thing so wickedly cruel that there are no words in which to describe the situation adequately. If this book will serve the one purpose of making fathers and mothers of the coming generation sympathetic and kindly to the little wild hearts that they bring into the world, it will perform a very great work indeed.

The Story of *Part One*

SKYGAK

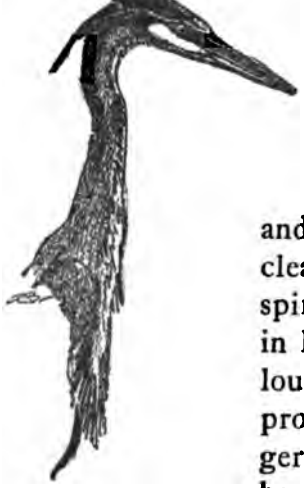
AN OLD MAN SEA-GULL

SKYGAK was an old-man sea-gull. He had circled and screamed over the waters of Puget Sound for many a season, and it is doubtful if there is anything in aërial lore that he did not know. He was an expert at fishing, and could swoop down on an unsuspecting smelt from a dizzy height and have the shiny

Skygak discovered that catching mice was Three-Spot's chief vocation, and he made her life a burden.

fish down his gullet without so much as touching his webbed feet to the water's surface. He could snatch up a sidling red crab before it could seek the shelter of a rock, and drop it neatly and accurately on a stone, to dart down upon the mangled remains before the juicy meal could be purloined by any of his kindred.

He knew when storms were coming,



and sometimes, when the skies were clearest and the sun warmest, he would spiral up to a great height and scream in long, quavering cadences that grew louder as the rain and wind approached. Then the Siwash clam-diggers on the beach would gather up their bags and shovels and bid their women see to brushwood, for they knew the cry of the sea-gull when the Storm-God rides. They respected the gray gull's warning.

We were children on the shores of Puget Sound, Brother and I. From our little log cabin, with its porch roof slanting low like an old-fashioned poke-bonnet, we would watch the sea-gulls circle in the sky or bob lazily on the blue waters of the bay like so many feathered corks.

We knew Skygak among the other gulls, for one wing was white, the other gray. So when we saw him, we named

him by a queer, fanciful name that seemed to fit a bird of air and water. And because the boat landing in front of the cabin furnished a resting place for webbed feet on sunshiny days, Skygak made it his headquarters, and we came to look for him and to be fond of him.

When we sailed in the tiny twelve-foot boat with its home-made leg-o'-mutton sail or paddled in the dugout canoe made for us by a Siwash Indian chief, we looked for Skygak in every flock of sea-gulls that passed us, and it was our superstition, made on the spur of the moment, as children's fancies are, that if he flew over us we would have good luck, and that a wish made on the instant would come true.

But we never dreamed that Skygak of the air lanes would one day be an intimate friend of ours, for we had been told by sailor and Indian alike—

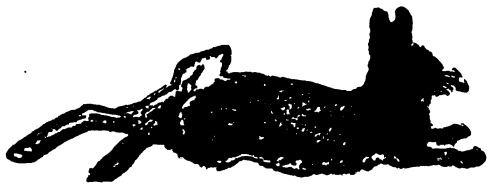
and who knows more of seafaring birds than they?—that sea-gulls could not be tamed. The Siwash chief who had given us our dugout canoe knew the habits of the winged scavengers and loved them. Perhaps the primitive heart of him, held in leash by the white man's civilization, was tuned to the wild, untamed heart of the gulls, for they flocked around his beach shanty unafraid, and ate the scraps of clams he flung to them; but he had never touched one of the gray brethren.

And so it happened, on a day of mists and clouds, that Skygak came into our lives as something more than a gray-and-white winged bird whose passage above our boat would make a wish come true.

It was a day typical of autumn in the Sound country. Gray rain pattered ceaselessly into gray waters that

stretched away to meet a leaden horizon, and low-hanging clouds swirled restlessly with every gust of wind. But the smell of wet pines was in the air; the grass was green and glistening with iridescent beads. It was a day when the out-of-doors called the hardy one to don overshoes, raincoat, and sou'wester hat and fare forth to breathe the wet fragrance of woods and field, to feel the soft rain on uplifted face, and to listen for the storm cry of the gulls circling against the sky.

Brother and I, clad against the rain, stood in wonder at the shore end of the float. For there on the far end was Skygak, a miserable, dripping figure hunched dejectedly on the wet planking. His once sleek wings hung limply at his sides, his feathers were draggled and unkempt, his head was hanging miserably as if the light but steady drizzle were torment to him.



Above him soared and circled his kindred of the sky, wondering, no doubt, what was wrong, for now and again one of them would turn in a half-circle, spinning on the tip of one great wing, and scream sharply, as if in invitation to Skygak to join the airy tribe. And the old-man sea-gull would turn one eye up to the birds above him and give vent to a plaintive, longing cry. His draggled wings would flap in the rain as if sheer force of will must bear him upward, then relax hopelessly as if the effort made him more miserable.

We watched and speculated, Brother and I, for never had we seen a gull in such a plight. We saw that he was denied the water, too, for he would stalk, with the wobbly, swinging motion of a web-foot tribe, to the edge of the float, crane his neck as if about to launch himself upon the rain-beaten

waves, and then retreat to the middle of the wharf once more. A gull who could neither fly nor swim! What had happened?

We took the problem to the Siwash chief a mile up the beach, mending a fish-net in his warm and smoky shanty. He listened impassively, yet with interest. And he returned with us to the float to diagnose the gull's ailment.

When he saw Skygak, he grunted briefly but sympathetically. The bird had been caught in the swell behind a large boat—a battle-ship, probably—when it was discharging oil, he told us. It was not an uncommon thing, he said. The gull's feathers were soaked with the heavy oil, and until it had evaporated, or until new feathers should grow, Skygak would be helpless both in the air and in the sea, and since he could not provide food for himself he would starve to death.

So spoke the Siwash chief, but his philosophy was not ours. We told each other that Skygak should not die, and we called to the wet, miserable gull that we would take care of him, but he did not even raise his head.

What should we feed him? We had neither clams nor fish, and we were afraid to go too near him, lest he mistake our friendly intentions and take to the water in self-defense, to be weighted down by his oil-soaked feathers.

With the permission of our always sympathetic mother we salvaged cookies from the jar behind the kitchen stove. We took cold griddle-cakes, too, and scraps of meat and bread. And with these dainties we set about the task of winning the gray gull's confidence and of saving him from the misfortune which had overtaken him.

Carefully and very quietly we went

down the float, as near as we could approach without Skygak's taking alarm. When he showed signs of restlessness, we advanced no further, but put a chunk of meat upon the planks and withdrew to watch and wait.

The gull, at first indifferent to everything but his unexplainable plight, gradually felt hunger's urge, and his long neck craned toward our offering of food. Slowly he waddled toward it, a grotesque gray bundle of draggled feathers, and with one vigorous gulp the meat disappeared.

Then we tossed him a chunk of bread softened with water, and this time Skygak did not hesitate. The first morsel had aroused an appetite which for the time being supplanted misery. He stalked forward and swallowed the food, turning on us the broadside of one black eye, as if asking for more.

Nor did we refuse him. We tossed him, piece by piece, the food we had brought with us, and returned to the pantry for more. Always we placed the bread or meat a little nearer the shore and the cabin, and Skygak followed the morsels anxiously, greedily, satisfying a hunger which must have been of long and painful duration.

Early dusk was upon us when we finally succeeded in tolling the gray gull through the front yard into the chicken run, and into an unused brooder house which offered a shelter against the rainy night.

The lamps were lighted in the little log cabin when we completed our self-appointed task of making Skygak comfortable, and our only regret was that we could not give our friend a blanket. We feared he would not understand.

That was the beginning of a three-

sided friendship. The first few days of Skygak's convalescence were spent in huddled misery, and he moved only when Brother or I came into the brooder house with food and water. Then the rain ceased, Indian summer came smilingly upon the Sound country, and when the sun shone warmly, Skygak decided that life was not all a haze of gloom, and he set about vigorously to restore himself to a normal condition. Hour after hour he pulled and massaged his feathers until some of the heavy oil was loosened. The sunshine helped to dry his draggled plumage, new feathers commenced to grow, and little by little Skygak became his old cocky self.

His affection for Brother and me was as apparent as was his dislike for all other members of the human race. The grown-ups he would not trust, and passers-by annoyed and alarmed him.

But he would follow us about wherever we went, stalking along behind us with grotesque dignity, and when invited, would fly up on my shoulder or on Brother's to receive bits of food from our fingers and to snap playfully at us with his great, powerful bill when we pretended to box with him.

The liberty of the ranch was his, but his favorite spot was a corner of the front porch where he would sit for hours in solemn contemplation of the bay in front. People who went by on the trail looked in wonder at the gray gull apparently very much at home in a little log cabin.

Soon he learned to eat with the chickens, and when the bran mash was spread for them in a long, wooden trough, Skygak would be there before the bucket was emptied. Then, as the hens came flocking around, the gull would spread his magnificent wings,

open his huge beak to its widest extent, and scream shrilly and fiercely, laying about him with his yellow beak like a warrior swinging a deadly sword. The startled poultry, unused to this changeling of the sea and sky, would scurry away with distressed and frightened cackles, and Skygak would eat his fill at the trough, pausing occasionally to administer punishment to any daring cockerel who ventured too near. Many a bunch of feathers have I seen hanging from his bill, like a scalplock hung from the belt of an Indian brave, mute witness to a battle of brief but bloody duration.

Our animals soon learned that this wandering guest was to be respected. Tinker, the rat terrier, learned to his cost that Skygak was not a hen to be chased from the front porch, if he chose to stay there.

Between our cat, Three-Spot, and

the gull, a bitter feud developed, which had for its beginning such a small thing as a mouse. One had been killed in a trap, and Brother tendered it to Skygak as an experiment. The delicacy was new, but wholly acceptable, and with one ecstatic snap of his beak Skygak swallowed it, and afterward, as Brother averred, fairly licked his chops. Three-Spot sulked and gloomed because of the slight, but her cup of woe was not full.

For in some mysterious manner, Skygak discovered that catching mice was Three-Spot's chief vocation, and he made her life a burden. One morning we heard an outraged yowl from the cat and an answering scream from Skygak. On the back porch we found the two, Three-Spot crouched over a dead mouse, eyes gleaming dangerously, tail switching from side to side, and every hair erect. The bird was

advancing cautiously, but relentlessly, wings outspread, beak wide open, screaming and snapping at every step. Three-Spot did not lack courage, but her experience had not included juggernaut gulls, and when the terrifying yellow beak was hard upon her, she fled, spitting venomously, and Skygak, like a disreputable robber chief, swallowed her hard-earned prize in one mouthful.

From that time, when he was not following Brother and me, or dozing on the front porch, or bullying the hens, he was trailing Three-Spot about, a relentless gray shadow, and if the luckless cat succeeded in keeping for herself one mouse that she caught, it was when Skygak was asleep in the brooder house.

Slowly but surely the old-man seagull recovered from his affliction. Some of the oil-soaked feathers

dropped out, and new ones took their place, and he risked short flights from time to time, cautiously at first, as if not sure of his powers, and then with increasing confidence. He ventured out into the water with perfect ease, and we knew it would be but a short time before he had completely regained his health.

When first he flew we were afraid we had lost him, but he returned at night-time, hungry and eager to be taken up on my shoulder. After that, when he flew, it was to come back to us as naturally as if we, and not the sea-gulls, were his kindred.

But there came a day when a feeling of restlessness was in the air. Brother and I, attuned to the moods of the woods and of out-of-door things, felt it keenly, and we were not surprised when we saw overhead the V formation of the wild geese flying southward.

Then the sea-gulls commenced to scream in short, sharp cadences, and a flock of the gray and white birds flew overhead, rising higher and higher as is the habit of the gray ones when the migrating call comes.

Skygak heard the call—that we could not doubt—for he was restless and would stretch himself on tiptoe, flapping his wings, turning his head up to the sky where a gray cloud of birds were flying. Then he would scream—short, broken cries as if torn by indecision. He loved us, we knew, but he was of the air lanes; the gray gulls were his kindred. Sooner or later he must go with them.

His flights grew longer, and once we did not see him for three days. Even when he was with us, he was ill at ease. The wild heart of him was longing for the untrammeled freedom of the winds and the sea, and gaunt cliffs untouched

by foot of man. He forgot to box with us; he no longer bullied the poultry yard; he even neglected to watch for Three-Spot's trophies of the hunt.

And then he went away. A week passed, and we mourned him bitterly. It was not so much his going—we knew we must expect that—but we had wanted to tell him good-by when he left, to wave our hands to him and wish him Godspeed, to watch him until he was only a speck in the sky. The Siwash chief said Skygak would never come back—but he did, once more.

It was on a day of crystal clearness, when the clouds were like tiny white boats in the sky. We stood in the yard, hand in hand, watching the wild geese pass overhead and the flocks of seagulls flying high above them. From the west came a gray cloud of the seabirds, with one gull flying far in the lead. And as we watched, the leader

left the flock of winging gulls and, like a falling star, swooped down upon us, spiraling lower and lower. We held our breath as we watched, for somehow, we knew, we knew—

A flash of one white wing showed clearly. I tried to speak, but no words came. Closer and closer came the bird, Skygak, our old-man sea-gull, and when he was no higher than the roof of the house, he circled slowly above our heads. Then he screamed twice—long, plaintive cries that we knew meant farewell.

We were crying, but we waved our hands to him and called, "Good-by, good-by!" And slowly he rose once more, the white of one white wing melting into gray. Higher and higher he winged, to take his place at the head of the flock. . . . He was just a speck against the sky, and still we called our farewells to him in words choked with

He circled slowly above our heads

tears—the specks vanished into cloudy distance—Skygak had gone forever.

But it was not without a thought of us. We shall always believe that he halted the winged caravan to tell us good-by—and the Siwash chief believes it, too.

Introducing

U-CHU-KA

THE JUMPER

U-CHU-KA

UPON the Hill Trail, which Brother and I called ours because we loved it so, you may yet see a little clearing made in the midst of red huckleberry bushes, Oregon grape, and dark green salal shrubs. As long as we lived in the little cabin by the bay, we never allowed underbrush to creep into this spot on the Hill Trail, for it was sacred to the memory of U-Chu-Ka, the only monument we could give him.

U-Chu-Ka was a tiny rabbit—a "jack-rabbit," I suppose natural historians would have called him. But we gave him the name that in the Chinook language means "the jumper," and we never called him anything else.

Part Two

U-CHU-KA

THE JUMPER

He never failed to answer our call

I remember the day we first saw him —a wee baby rabbit he was, escaped somehow from his mother's vigilance, and so much interested in the big world outside the burrow where he had spent his short life that he hardly knew whether to be afraid of us or merely curious. In such a case he no doubt remembered his mother's warning, for he "froze." By this I mean that he remained rigid, the tan of his fur blending with the mottled greenery and the brown tones of the forest undergrowth. But Brother and I could "freeze" too, having learned the art from the woods creatures whom we knew and loved. So we stood perfectly still, and then it was a case of seeing who could hold out the longer.

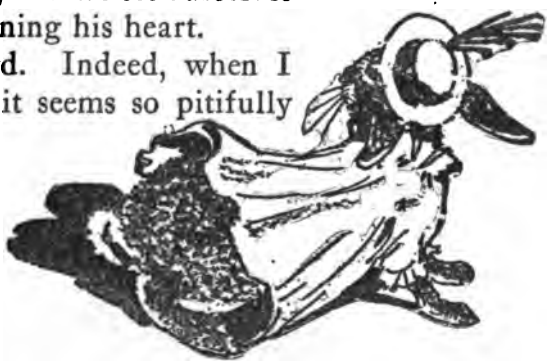
It was U-Chu-Ka who finally capitulated in the battle of freezing. His curiosity became greater than his fear, and he sat up on his haunches, his tiny forefeet held primly over his stomach, his ears—much too long for him—

tilted questioningly in our direction, and his black dot of a nose twitching ceaselessly.

We were, I am sure, the first human beings U-Chu-Ka had seen, and although behind him were countless rabbit traditions as to what fearful creatures humans were, U-Chu-Ka, being so young, was possessed of optimism and confidence. Brother and I were so happy when the little fellow with his soft brown eyes decided that we were friends to be trusted! Oh, if we had only realized that there were other people not so friendly to little brown rabbits, whom U-Chu-Ka might have the misfortune to meet!

But we never thought of that. Our one realization was that here was a new woods friend, and we set ourselves to the task of winning his heart.

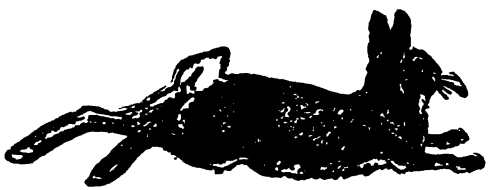
It was not hard. Indeed, when I think of it now, it seems so pitifully



easy. And I wonder, if every one knew just how easy it was, if men would carry sticks that shoot flame and death into the domain of the woods creatures —if they would not carry apples instead.

It was an apple that first won U-Chu-Ka's heart. Brother had one, of course, and we nibbled bites off and placed the juicy morsels on the trail in front of us. Then, walking quietly backward, we waited at a safe distance for the wind to carry the delectable apple fragrance to U-Chu-Ka's wiggling nose.

Nor was it long before one satiny ear—so fragile that it was almost transparent—drooped and then rose again. The twitching nose worked harder; U-Chu-Ka sat up straighter than ever; and then, with funny little hops, he came toward us, hesitating occasionally, once pausing to sit up on



his haunches as if asking himself if he were doing the right thing in approaching thus boldly.

Finally he came to the bits of apple and promptly forgot his fear in his delight at the unknown dainty. By the time he had eaten the few morsels we had spread out for him, we had others ready, this time only at arm's length.

Later we proffered bits of the fruit in our hands, held very steadily so that no jerking should alarm the little brown rabbit. At first he was undecided whether to accept the morsels so close to the big human creatures, but something, I am sure, told him that there was no harm in us. In the end he hopped over to my outstretched hand and nibbled daintily at the apple, while I held my arm so still it ached.

What Mother Rabbit would have said of the way we stuffed U-Chu-Ka, that day, I do not know, but I am sure

she would not have approved. We fed him until his small stomach was round as a ball. When the apple diet seemed to pall, we gathered tender blades of grass, and very soon the little brown one would not take alarm at our movements, but would watch us with solemn baby dignity, sitting up on his haunches or squatting in a round ball, his tiny ears laid over his back—a sure sign that he was no longer nervous.

How we hated to leave him that day! We didn't take him down the hill and make him a home by the log cabin, for we had no wish to frighten him, and as for foraging for himself in the woods, we were sure U-Chu-Ka knew how to go about it. So we left him at the bend of the trail where we had first seen him. We called it U-Chu-Ka's corner, and we left the core of the apple for him to nibble on after we had gone.

The next afternoon about the same time—for the woods creatures are apt to do certain things at certain hours—we came up the Hill Trail, whistling, and were almost at U-Chu-Ka's corner before it occurred to us that the sound might frighten him away if he were still in that neighborhood. But curiosity is a rabbit's strongest trait, and suddenly there he was, hopping out of the underbrush into the little clearing as if in response to our call—indeed as if he had been waiting.

We had brought offerings of lettuce and cabbage leaves, and this time it was not half so long before U-Chu-Ka would eat from our hands and permit us to fondle his velvet softness.

We came every day after that, always whistling, with choicest tidbits for our little friend. He would come into his "corner" hopping out from the greenery like a tiny puff-ball,

sit up very primly, ears tilted, his nose wiggling, until he was sure it was his friends. Then down the trail toward us he would bound, with such long hops that his hind feet seemed to go above his head. Oh, U-Chu-Ka, little brown one, if we only had not taught you to have confidence in humans—to come unafraid when we whistled!

As the summer went by, U-Chu-Ka grew and grew. From a baby rabbit he became a half-grown rabbit, and we realized that before long he would be a very large rabbit indeed. But he never failed to answer our call, and through the long summer afternoons we would play upon the hill, the three of us. We played house, U-Chu-Ka submitting without protest to being dressed in a doll's frock, with a tiny hat tying back his ears. He was our child, and we rocked him to sleep, sent him to school, disciplined him at

times, and pretended that he talked to us. If I could only give you a picture of U-Chu-Ka, half-grown now, in a blue gingham doll dress, his brown paws stuck through the short sleeves, his white knob of a tail flashing impudently from behind when he hopped about, and his soft brown eyes grotesquely large under the white hat tied under his chin!

And then, one day—it is a day I do not like to think of—we decided that U-Chu-Ka should have a birthday party. So we took cookies, apples, and lettuce sandwiches up the hill. It was hot, with scarcely a breeze, and sounds carried distinctly. From far away we heard a whistled tune, and we knew that some infrequent passer-by was on the Hill Trail. The sound grew louder as we climbed, and then—a single shot that sent echoes vibrating against the startled hills.

A gunshot! It was not such an infrequent sound through the woods that skirted the Bay, but our hearts suddenly contracted as if a hand had clutched them.

We said not a word to each other, but broke into a jogging trot that brought us hot and panting to the top of the hill. From there it was but a hundred yards or so to U-Chu-Ka's corner, and we ran doggedly, with a great fear tearing at our hearts.

Oh, that moment! U-Chu-Ka's corner was empty—but perhaps he would come if we whistled! We tried to form our dry lips for the sound, but none came. For we saw simultaneously, in the little clearing, a bright red patch on the low-hanging ferns—a little tuft of brown fur and a bit of white down.

The hunter had come and gone. U-Chu-Ka could not have known that

the long stick pointed at him was filled with flame and death. We could picture the scene so well—the man, swinging carelessly down along the trail whistling, the gun over his shoulder—a sudden halt as a little brown rabbit hopped out from the underbrush into the small clearing and raised himself inquisitively on his haunches—a flash—a bundle of limp fur, blood-stained—a little brown pelt dangling pathetically down from a leather belt. Perhaps the man whistled again as he went down the trail. He could not know that two children, back by the little clearing, were sobbing their hearts out with their faces buried in the cool, green moss, because of a playmate who would come no more.

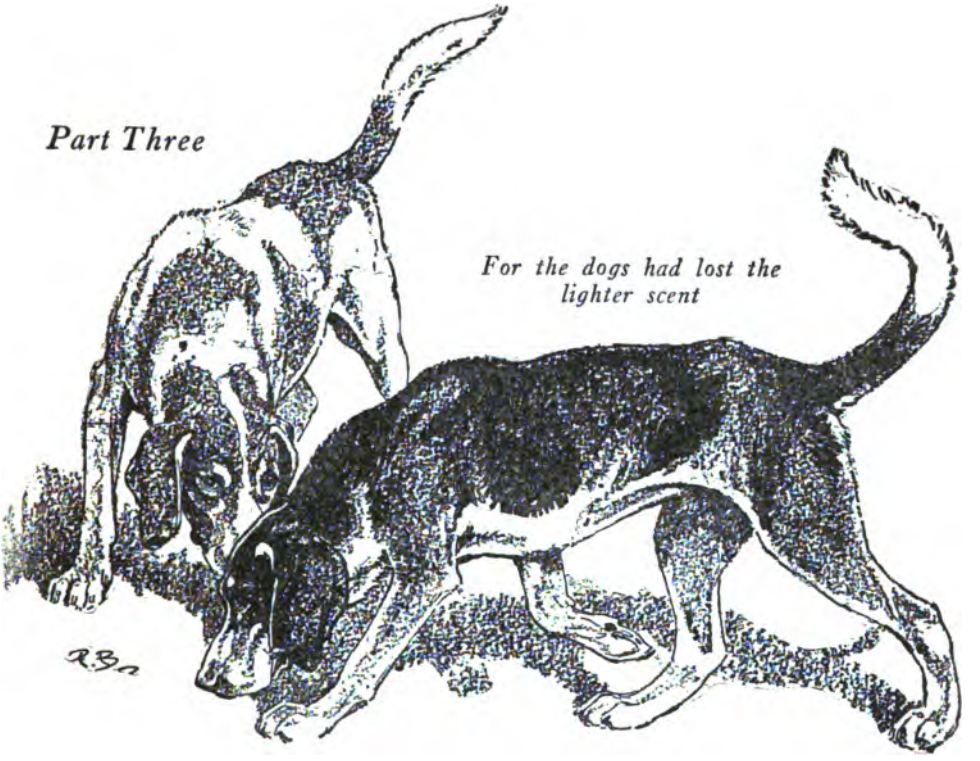
We tamed no more rabbits, Brother and I. We felt that we had been the cause of our friend's death, and the least we could do was to refrain from

putting confidence into other woods creatures, to be shattered by humans who did not know or care about the wild heart.

And so we planted twin-flower vines in the little clearing, and edged it with yellow Johnny-jump-up plants. It was our futile way of saying to U-Chu-Ka how sorry we were—how we loved him and how we missed him.

And today on the Hill Trail you may see U-Chu-Ka's corner, grown over a bit now, because no one chops away the underbrush. But still the twin-flowers and the Johnny-jump-up's bloom there in memory of U-Chu-Ka, the little brown friend who lives on in our hearts and our loving memory.

Part Three



For the dogs had lost the lighter scent

SANCTUARY

NO doubt it was a silly name to give a deer—"Leonard"—but Brother and I named him on the spur of the moment, and, probably because we did not know the Indian word for "fawn," we resorted to the

prosaic title to which our woods friend learned to respond.

Our acquaintance with Leonard began in such a dramatic way and with such suddenness that we had no time to think about a suitable name—although we did remember to name him even in the first chaotic moment of meeting. It was a habit that came to us as naturally as breathing.

It was during those days of licensed killing known as "the deer season." All day long, from across the bay, a mile in width, came the long-drawn-out baying of hounds and an occasional shot. On our side of the bay, too, high up in the wooded hills, we could hear the hounds at chase, and our hearts were heavy, being weighted with fear for the hunted things of the woods. We wondered if the hunters would find the salt-lick which we had stumbled upon in our wanderings and where we

had spent many breathless hours watching for the slim-limbed does and the antlered bucks to come and take refreshment.

We stood outside the little log cabin, our faces raised to the hills, our hands clasped tightly together, listening shiveringly to the hunting cry of the dogs. They were in full chase, we knew, after some luckless deer. We felt so helpless, yet so eager to help protect our friends of the wilds. I wonder if our unexpressed prayer did not have something to do with what happened.

The baying of the hounds alternated with the crash of the underbrush where they were running, men coming close behind. The dogs were skirting the top of a hill. All at once their baying became a series of whimpering barks. They were for the moment off the scent.

And then, down the hill, with such flying leaps that he scarcely touched the earth, came a little deer, a fawn, heading straight for the cabin. Was he mad with fear that he sought the home of humans? Or did he know by that unexplainable power which animals have that we were friends, that we would protect his life with ours—did he, I wonder? For he cleared the four-foot fence with a bound and trotted up to us, then stood trembling, his soft eyes glazed with fright, white foam at the corners of his mouth.

This is not a fiction story; I am telling it as it happened.

The little fawn thrust his hot, dry nose against my hand, and when Brother and I, recovering from our petrified amazement, put our arms around his velvety neck, he did not shrink away, but pressed against us as if mutely begging protection.

If you have never had a wild creature throw itself upon your mercy, if you have never known the feeling of a soft, brown deer body pressed against yours in pleading and in confidence, you can not realize the wild thrill of ecstasy that went through us.

"His name is Leonard!" I found breath to say, my face against the velvety neck of the little deer.

But Brother, being a man in embryo, was thinking of sterner things. The hounds, he reminded me, would shortly find the scent of the deer. If they came baying down the hill, the fawn would take fright and dart away before we could stop him.

It was not a pleasant picture, but what were we to do? The short, whining barks of the dogs had already changed to the long, triumphant cadence of the hound in full cry. They would come down the hill, the hunters

would claim Leonard as their game, they would—

"Meat!" whispered Brother tensely, and cryptic as it may sound to the reader I understood perfectly. I wondered that I had not thought of it myself. Brother outlined a plan of action in a few brief words while the baby deer, with knees wobbling sadly, turned terror-haunted eyes up the hill, his delicate nostrils quivering, yet made no move to leave us.

It took my best efforts to lead the little fawn into the shelter of the brooder house. The scent was foreign to anything he had known before, and the darkness terrified him anew. He could not have known that safety lay within that strange place, but he did know—of that I am sure—that he could trust himself with me, for he came, hesitatingly, urged always by my voice and my hands gently caress-

ing him. He went with me, even through the door, into the semi-darkness of the frame brooder house, and though when I swung the door shut he nervously leaped away from my side, it was to return an instant later, as if begging my pardon for his involuntary action.

Brother, in the meantime, had dashed into the kitchen and emerged as quickly with a juicy steak—it was to have been cooked for dinner that night—which he hacked into chunks with his jackknife as he raced up the hill.

With my eyes against a crack I could see him panting upward to the point where Leonard had emerged from the underbrush of the woods.

And scarcely had he arrived when a lean hound, with lolling tongue and nose to the ground, burst from the shrubbery, uttering a long-drawn-out

bay. The little deer beside me shook in every limb, and I was trembling, too, as if it were I, not Leonard, whom the dogs were trailing. We crouched there in the darkness, the wild thing of the woods and the child who loved the wild things of the woods, and in those tense moments I felt the heart of the baby deer pounding against my body. Can you wonder why now, when I see the body of a deer killed in the hunt, I can not congratulate the hunter on his prowess? I know how the deer at bay stood still and trembled! I know how his soft, brown eyes grew wide with helpless terror. I know how his heart pounded suffocatingly. And I can not be glad for the hunter; I am only sorry that he does not understand.

And up on the hill Brother was acting his part in the drama. When the first lean hound swung into sight, he deftly tossed a chunk of red, juicy

meat in his pathway. The dog ignored the first piece, so intent was he on the fresh scent of the deer. But another chunk aimed just ahead of him was a temptation not to be withstood, and he gobbled it up, pausing a second in his chase. Another dog followed him out of the underbrush, finding the first piece of meat Brother had thrown.

It did not take long for the two hounds to finish off the entire steak so obligingly tossed to them by the small boy almost hidden in a clump of tall ferns. And when it was gone, Leonard was safe, for the dogs, with the smell of fresh meat in their nostrils, had lost the lighter scent of the little deer's flying hoofs, and they sniffed shamefacedly and with befuddled yappings, until the hunters came cursing down the hill and crashing into the open, to berate the dogs soundly for having lost the game —as they supposed—in the woods.

They could not know that the little boy in the clump of ferns, looking on so innocently, was responsible for the hounds' failure, nor that their game was at that instant held tightly in the arms of a little girl who was shaking with excitement as well as with fear, lest something happen to betray the refugee's hiding-place.

But nothing did. The men stamped back into the woods, taking the hounds with them, and that day at least we heard no more baying on the hill.

And Leonard—we were afraid to let him go back to the woods until the deer season had passed or until he was of a size better able to care for himself. The grown-ups helped us, and we contrived a pen with wire netting over the top and sides as well, with the brooder house as shelter for nights. And here we kept Leonard a willing prisoner, while the hounds bayed on the hills

and shots echoed across the water. How we wished, when we heard them, that we could make a place of refuge for every hunted thing in the world to come to and be cared for. But Leonard at least was safe, and he seemed to know it, too. Though he trembled whenever he heard the long hunting cry of the dogs, he did not take refuge even in the brooder house. He knew, I think, that he was in sanctuary.

As the days went on, we released our little deer from his pen, first with a collar and a rope, and then with nothing to hold him. He followed us like a dog, trotting beside us with dainty, mincing steps, sometimes leaping ahead of us, turning to look back at us, his large ears at an angle, his slim young body silhouetted against the green of the woods.

He soon learned his name and

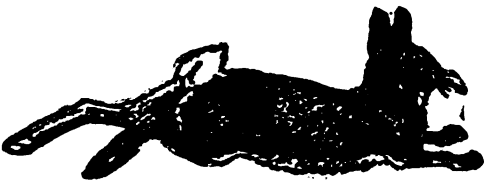
would come bounding out to us when we called. We fed him things his ancestors probably never tasted—cookies, apples, lettuce leaves, and candy, in addition to the grass and tender leaves we brought him before we allowed him to accompany us. But best of all the dainties we gave him was the chewing gum that Brother in a playful moment tendered him. Leonard accepted it daintily, as was his wont, and chewed it, as Brother and I remarked, with an actual expression of surprise coming into his brown eyes. He chewed and chewed. Perhaps he thought it a new variety of cud. At any rate, he gave it his hearty indorsement, and after that he would nose in Brother's pockets to find the stick of gum that was always there for him.

So Leonard became one of our happy family, and though we knew

that sometime in the distant future we should have on our hands the problem of what to do with an antlered buck who had forgotten the ways of the woods and accepted those of civilization, we did not feel sorry about it, being content to dwell in the happy present, while Leonard seemed content as well.

But one night I woke to find Brother's hand tugging at mine. He was whispering to me that something was outside Leonard's pen—perhaps it was a bear or a wildcat trying to get at him.

Foolish children we may have been, but we were not cowardly. It never occurred to us to rouse the grown-ups. Leonard was our friend and our responsibility. From my window the two of us crept out on the roof, white nightgowned figures, shaking with cold and excitement. From the roof we dropped easily to the railing of the



picket fence at the back of the cabin and from there to the ground.

Like two little white wraiths we crept along in the shadow of the fence until we could see the outlines of the brooder house and the pen which enclosed it. There was a moon, but it was thickly hidden by clouds. All we could distinguish was a dark form against the wire netting, a shape that moved restlessly, now away from the pen, now back to it.

As our eyes became accustomed to the darkness, we saw that Leonard was in the pen outside the brooder house, and we questioned each other silently. Surely no deer would come thus to meet an enemy animal that wanted to destroy.

And then, as if in answer to our question, the clouds parted and a pale moon turned the darkness into half-shadowed light. With the sudden ef-

fulgence came the weird gleam of four eyes turned in our direction—for our scent had carried to sensitive nostrils. Brother and I, for an instant, caught each other's hands and gasped.

Then two of the luminous lights vanished, as the slim animal outside the pen sprang away in great bounds that carried her into the shadows beyond our ken—but not before we had recognized the slim, fleeing form for a doe. We knew it was Leonard's mother, who had found her baby.

We climbed back into our window as silently as we had left it. Brother in his cot, and I in mine, stared up into the darkness, trying to tell ourselves that ours was the right to keep the fawn we had befriended, yet knowing that the mother heart was calling for the little brown deer whom we loved so well. And we knew that in the end we must relinquish our claim—

Leonard, after all, belonged to the woods, and the mother heart of the woods was calling.

Because we loved him so, we tried to pretend, the next day, that the deer we had seen was not Leonard's mother—that it was merely a friend from the woods who had come down by moonlight to pay a nocturnal call. In our hearts, though, we knew better. Leonard all the day was restless; he pricked his ears continually as if waiting for a voice from the forest. We could scarcely coax him out of his distrait mood, even with a double ration of the chewing gum he loved so well.

The next night sleep was impossible. Though we heard nothing, we knew, somehow, that outside Leonard's pen was a slim brown body pressed close against the wire netting. We rose, at last, and crept out over the roof and

down to the ground. The doe was there, as we had foreseen. At our approach she bounded away with only the faintest rustle of leaves and snapping of twigs to mark her progress. But knowing that she would not go far —that she would come back to her baby—Brother and I went quickly forward and opened the door of the pen.

Leonard came to us and thrust his nose against my hand. We knelt on the ground, putting our arms around him, pressing our faces against his soft, brown neck, telling him with tears behind our whispered words that he must go with his mother, that the danger season was passed, and that he was free to go back to his kindred.

We stole away, but Leonard followed us, as if asking where we went and why he was not to go with us. For the first time we pushed him away

from us, though you can not know what it meant to us to do it. He stood still then, as if wondering, perhaps a little hurt, and we, not daring to look back, ran for the fence, clambered upon it, and gained the roof.

Once there, we could not resist watching a bit, and it was not long before the two luminous eyes gleamed from the underbrush. Then we saw a shapely, dark body come slowly into the open, and Leonard, with light, springing bounds, had rushed to meet his mother. For an instant we saw again the glowing orbs of two pairs of eyes. Then the lights vanished; two dark bodies moved side by side into the blackness of the woods; we heard the light crackle of underbrush; and then silence.

Silently we crept into our beds, and long afterward I heard Brother's choking whisper coming through the

darkness—my own face was buried in the pillow:

"I know—Leonard's going to miss —his—gum—"

We cried ourselves to sleep that night, thinking of an empty pen and of a little brown friend gone from us forever.

He questioningly sniffed the breeze.

Part Four

THE FAERY NIGHT

THERE came a night in June when the moon rose a great, yellow ball of light over the fir trees that crowned the hill. It was a night for adventure, for magic and mystery. And I, wide awake on the camp cot in the front yard of the cabin, listened to the faint lapping of the water upon the beach not a single stone's-throw away, and to the wordless song of the pine trees as the night wind swept drowsy fingers across their branches—harps that woke to melody only when the daylight had gone and the stars stole out to listen to their song. The puffy maple tree which guarded the little log cabin was murmuring softly to itself, its leaves nodding to each other as if confiding

some wonderful secret, and the giant fir tree on the other side of the porch stood erect and motionless as if it were a sentinel and thus disdained to gossip.

From far out in the bay came faint splashes which told of salmon leaping, and now and then the distant cry of a night bird, so faint as to be only the shadow of a sound. In the air was the smell of grass freshly wet with dew, of pine trees drenched and glistening, of wild syringa on the hillside, and, more pronounced, the scent of the tiny Mother of God roses that clambered over the cabin in a white and fragrant wreath.

The stars were bright as the tears of angels, from which the Chinook Indians say they were made, and the moon in their midst flooded hill and bay with a silvery light made more intense by the blackness of the forest.

Somehow there was a hint of expec-

tancy in the air, as if the summer had looked forward to this one night and was a-thrill with the joy of its coming. I could not sleep, for I was attuned to the things of the out-of-doors, and I, too, was a-thrill with the expectation of something—I knew not what.

I watched Altair rise over the "Happy Family" pines with his two attendant stars that are like the outspread wings of an eagle, and I kissed my hand to him in greeting.

A star fell, leaving a trailing line of light in its wake, and suddenly I felt a little sad, for a Siwash Indian chief had told us that when a star fell, it was a flower tossed by the hand of a good spirit from Paradise to ease the pain of a soul passing out into the Great Darkness.

Then Amarillo, the big yellow cat, padded across the grass with little throaty mewings of greeting, and I

felt the light thud of his body as he leaped on the bed and settled himself at my feet. He, too, was restless, for he would raise and lower his tawny head and would sometimes turn his golden eyes upon me as if seeking an explanation for the thrill that was in the night.

So I was not surprised when I heard a faint, familiar scraping which told me that Brother had climbed from his bedroom window and was sliding down the roof to the fence.

Since we had only one camp cot, Brother and I must needs take turns sleeping out of doors. And although this night was mine, I knew that he, too, had felt its magic and could not abide the stuffy darkness of the cabin when the world outside was bathed in moonlight. He came tiptoeing around the corner of the house very quietly so as not to waken the grown-ups, and Amarillo purred loudly as he saw him

come, and dug his claws into the bedclothes with contented, prickling sounds.

Brother was fully dressed, and he put his lips close to my ear as he whispered: "Do you know what kind of a night this is?"

"No," I answered breathlessly.

"A fairy night!" he breathed with awe. "The old fisherman told me that on moonlight nights the fairies dance in the moss ring on the Hill Trail. Come quick, let's go!"

I needed no second bidding. Even as he spoke, I was drawing over my head the knee-length dress I had worn during the day, and was feeling for my moccasins tucked away from the dew under the rubber covering of the bed.

Hand in hand we slipped out of the yard and up the trail, moving as silently as wraiths. Amarillo followed to the edge of the woods and then slipped away on business of his own.

Up the hill we hurried, up the narrow trail patched with moonlight and shadows. The wet branches of the pines brushed across our faces; our bare legs were swished by fern fronds as we passed. Sometimes a twig crackled underfoot, and now and then we heard a slight rustling in the underbrush where a little animal was moving.

We passed by the spring which gurgled dreamily into the pool shadowed by ferns and alders. A mother deer and her baby were drinking there, and although they turned their great eyes upon us, luminous in the moonlight that sifted through the branches, they did not start or run as we stole by.

The top of the hill was gained at last, and the Hill Trail which we called ours. Well we knew the fairy ring, a circle of moss in a clearing, ringed around with pink twin-flowers

and wild strawberry vines, a fitting place for elfin feet to dance on a moonlight night. And as we neared the clearing flooded by the bright moonlight, we trembled with ecstasy and anticipation. That the fairies did dance there we never doubted, but would they reveal themselves to the eyes of mortals, even such friendly mortals as ourselves?

Crouched behind a cedar log and screened by salal bushes, we watched and waited, our eyes glued to the moss ring in the patch of moon silver—but no fairies came.

Just the same it *was* a fairy night, as you shall see. For presently a little brown bear came out into the clearing, making considerably more noise than his size warranted, sat up on his haunches, and sniffed the breeze questioningly. He nibbled daintily at the leaves of a red huckleberry bush, and

having finished his nocturnal repast, walked pigeon-toed over to a cedar tree, scratched his back against it, making rumbling noises of content, and finally raised himself to his full height—which was not so high after all—and marked how tall he was on the shaggy bark of the tree by scratching it deeply with his claws. Then he waddled away in his bow-legged fashion, and we heard the faint crashing of the underbrush as he passed through.

There came a wakeful brown rabbit, who hopped into the very center of the fairy ring, wiggled his ears and nose, and then began to make an elaborate toilet—in honor, we thought, of the elfin ball. He washed his paws with care and gave each tapering ear a thorough massage. Last, he twisted like a contortionist to assure himself that his white knob of a tail was in perfect order, and finally being satis-

fied with his inspection, he loped leisurely away without so much as the crackle of a twig.

The next two visitors to the moonlit clearing were two baby skunks striped with brown and white and with graceful tufts of white for tails. Strangely enough, Brother and I were not afraid of what might happen should they suddenly be aware of our presence and become frightened, for it seemed to us that we too belonged to the fairy night and that nothing could happen to mar the perfect beauty of it. The little animals played like kittens, dashing out at each other from the shadows and rolling about in mock ferocity, but presently they, too, stole away, silently, as wood creatures move, and we were left alone with the moonlit night and the empty fairy ring.

Then from the direction of the trail came a cry of pain—like a human cry.

The spell of the night was shattered, and we gripped each other's hands and thought of flight. But again came the sound, a whimpering cry like a child in distress, and the fear which had clutched at our hearts vanished as suddenly, for we knew it must be an animal—some woods friend sorely hurt. So without further pause we left the shelter of the log and hurried across the clearing to the trail. The sound came from beyond the "Happy Family" pines, and we hastened toward it.

In the lumber clearing just off the trail we found what we had half expected—a young fox caught in a steel trap by his front paws, and he was whimpering with the pain of it. The dark eyes which he turned toward us showed a frenzied, greenish light, and as we came nearer, he yelped sharply, tugging frantically at the sharp teeth which never relaxed their grip.

The pity in our hearts made us forgetful of his fear, but as we started toward him, he wrenched backward, dragging the heavy trap to the full length of the chain, his small, gray-brown body a-quiver with terror and pain. So then we waited, approaching very quietly and slowly. Finally his struggles ceased from sheer fatigue, and the eyes which he turned upon us were dull and lifeless. Brother tried to hold me back, but I would not have it so, and coming very close to the little fox, I put my hand on his soft, furry head. He did not bite or even cringe. Perhaps his pain was so great that he could suffer no more and so could not be afraid, or perhaps it was because he sensed that my touch was a friendly one and that help was near at hand.

Together Brother and I pried the steel jaws apart, and the little fox, set free, limped away for a few feet and

then fell exhausted. So I picked him up, and walking quietly so as not to hurt or alarm him, we sought again the forest pool, mottled now with deep shadows and pale lights. The mother deer and her baby had gone, and in the cool, gurgling water of the little stream we bathed the wounded feet of our friend and named him "Reginald." We made sure that the paws were not broken, only lacerated by the sharp teeth of the trap, and when he began to stir and move his head in quick jerks from side to side, we set him down on the cool moss. After a little while he commenced to lick the hurt paws, very gently at first and then with increasing confidence, and he did not go away at once. He feared us no more than he would have feared a brother and sister fox. So for an hour, until the moonlight gleams became fainter and the shadows deeper, the

three of us lingered by the forest pool. Brother and I pretended that Reginald talked to us and that he could understand what we said to him. And when finally he finished licking his paws and slipped away into the darkness, we regained once more the moonlit Hill Trail and started for home.

But there was one thing we must do, and we turned back to "Reginald's clearing," as we called it. In the waning light we found the trap which had so cruelly hurt our little friend, and we unwound the chain from the tree. Into the blackness of the underbrush we flung it and laughed defiantly as we heard it crash in the thicket. Then, as if some avenging power were hard on our heels, we fled down the trail out of the wood and stole into the yard without even the creaking of a gate to betray us.

Thrilled to the very core of my

being, I huddled into bed. And Amarillo, who had long since returned, arched his back and yawned widely as if to imply that such a nocturnal excursion was not respectable.

Brother started to tiptoe around to the fence and thus gain the roof and his bedroom, but I stopped him with a sharp hiss, and he tiptoed back to me.

"What shall we say if some hunter asks us about the trap?" I breathed into his ear, and he doubled up and laughed noiselessly.

"We will tell him that anything can happen on a fairy night," he whispered back and stole away to the fence, while I watched the moon settle behind the distant blue hills, and with the ensuing darkness came the breath of the morning breeze. The fairy night was over.

Part Five

THE FRIENDSHIP THAT FAILED

THE FRIENDSHIP THAT FAILED

ON THE shores of Puget Sound, where the woods come down to the shore to fraternize with the little white-capped waves of the bay, lived Henry, the heron. How old he was before Brother and I came to know him, we could not tell. But an old-man bird he must have been surely, for his was a knowledge of fishing that comes from long experience.

Every day we would watch him

from our little log cabin—watch him sail majestically toward the float, pause directly above, and flap down upon it, using his lanky legs as balancing weights. He would stand there for many moments, turning his head slightly from side to side as if revolving in his mind whether he had done the wise thing in coming, and what his next move ought to be.

Such a deliberate bird Henry seemed, but this apparent deliberation was only one of the tricks of his trade. I am sure that had I been a fish, I would have believed there was nothing

Cannon came charging in a whirlwind of feathers.

to fear from the immobile bunch of gray feathers balanced on two skinny stilt legs, and I would have swum merrily under the very tip of his beak. But Henry's sharp, black eyes missed nothing, as the hapless fish found to their cost when they ventured too near the surface. With one lightning swoop the great bill cleaved the water, and the next instant a shiny fish was wriggling in his beak.

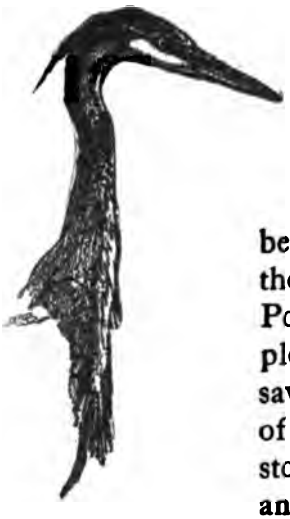
Sometimes he did his fishing while standing in the water up to his knees—or where his knees would be if herons had such things. With his head drawn in between his feathered shoulders and his long beak sticking out at right angles like a lance at rest, he seemed to be taking a siesta, and only the occasional plunge of his long bill into the water, and the accompanying twinkle of a small silver fish as it flapped in amazement before it slid down into his

gullet, proved that he was awake—and hungry.

We gave Henry his name when he was but an acquaintance of ours. We never really hoped to have him for a friend, but we liked him, and we felt that he liked us, too. So when he did his fishing on our float or knee-deep in the water of the little cove before the cabin, we threw scraps of bread to him, which he accepted gravely and always dipped in the salt water before swallowing.

We used to hear his strange, mournful cry late at night as he flew northward past the cove on his way to the pine-tree where he lived, and we always pretended he was giving us a greeting before he turned in for the night.

We found out, too, where he made his home. We had often seen him land on a bony, fallen tree half a mile up the



beach, which jutted straight out into the water and which we called "the Pointing Finger." Once, in our explorations along the beach trail, we saw Henry standing on the gray shaft of the dead tree, and as we watched, he stooped slightly, then flapped upward and flew into a tall pine tree almost in front of us. When we stood under it, we could distinguish the outlines of a nest high up in the branches. Perhaps at that time there was a Mrs. Henry and maybe some young Henrys—I do not know. But certain it was that when he became a friend of ours by reason of a happening which might have ended in tragedy for him, he seemed to be without family cares or responsibilities.

During the season when the salmon were running, the Old Fisherman, who was at once our mentor and playfellow, spread his nets from the shore-line

straight out into the bay for a hundred yards, leaving them there the night through to catch the large silver salmon on their way to the creeks to spawn. One of these nights he had laid his net near the Pointing Finger, and Brother and I, going with him in his creaky, flat-bottomed boat to see the result of the haul, heard ahead of us a great splashing, and saw dimly outlined in the midst of the cork floats a dark body that flapped and struggled.

We whispered excitedly that perhaps a seal had become entangled in the net, but the Old Fisherman thought it only a salmon, or perhaps a dogfish whose pointed snout had been caught in the meshes of the cords.

But it was neither seal nor salmon, for on rowing close to the net we saw by the light of the Old Fisherman's lantern a huge, gray bird with flapping wings and slashing beak. It was

Henry, the heron, who had alighted on one of the cork floaters, perhaps thinking it safe footing, and had thus become hopelessly snared in the net.

What was even worse, he had hurt himself cruelly in his struggles, for one long leg was dangling helplessly, and one of his wide gray wings hung limp at his side. When the Old Fisherman, with gruff words but tender hands, released him from the cords which bound him, he could not fly, but flapped helplessly upon the water. And so it was that we lifted him into the boat and tied a gunnysack around him so that he should not injure himself further, for he did not understand that our intentions were kindly and snapped at us fiercely with his huge beak.

The Old Fisherman, who had lived with the Indians and who had acquired their curative gifts, took Henry, the heron, in charge when we reached

the little cabin in the cove, first muzzling him by tying a stout cord about his beak. Then he set the broken wing and put the leg in splints. The grown-ups suggested putting Henry in the hen-house for the night, but Brother and I would not have it so, and with their help we constructed a pen behind the kitchen stove where he could be warm and comfortable. We left him moving his head jerkily from side to side, blinking his beady eyes now and then and snapping his bill as if in troubled retrospect.

But during the next week Henry, the heron, came to know that we were his friends and that he had nothing to fear from us. He allowed us to stroke him and would accept morsels of food from our fingers, even taking care not to nip us with his powerful beak.

When he had finally ceased to fear us, we gave him the liberty of the back-

yard, and he would stalk about stiffly like a peg-legged veteran of the wars. But most of the time he would stand with his head drawn in between his shoulders, the picture of dejection, and Brother and I knew he was longing for the freedom of the air and the water which had been his. He was longing for the cool lapping of little waves against his legs, for the silver gleam of fish in the blue depths; and he wanted to fly once more—to circle over the bay, to flap down upon the Pointing Finger. Perhaps he was even lonesome for the nest in the pine-tree. At any rate we were sorry for his sadness and set about to remedy it as best we could. We fished indefatigably from the float, and the Old Fisherman brought us smelts and silver perch from his nets.

Then, to make our guest feel more at home, we would put our catch in a

wash-tub filled with water, and Henry would fish for them choosing his prey with calculating eye and gobbling it up with one great peck. It was the best we could do for him, and we felt that he appreciated that, too, for he obligingly hunted down every fish in the tub, and then would turn his grave head toward us, giving us the broadside effect of one shiny eye, whether in thanks or in petition for more we could not determine.

But it was really due to Cannon, our bantam rooster, that Henry's convalescence was not entirely unendurable. Cannon was the eldest son of Liberty, a small bantam hen who had brought forth her brood on the fourth of July—hence her name and his. He was the undisputed king of the poultry yard, for a strain of game cock in his blood had made him fearless of everything and an unspeakable bully. There was

no hen or cock of twice his size who dared come near his end of the feed trough, and even Prince, the mammoth White Rock rooster, stood in awe of him. Perhaps he was merely amused at the airs Cannon gave himself, and so let the tiny cock have his way, but at any rate his record of combat was unsullied by a single defeat.

I have seen many a strange friendship between animals and between birds, too, but never one so curious as that of Henry, the heron, and Cannon, the bantam rooster. For friends they were, and real friends, too. They became acquainted when Cannon, flying into the back-yard one day, spied the stiff-legged Henry and immediately decided to do battle with him. He ruffled up his neck feathers, whirled round and round with one wing dusting the ground, and advancing on Henry, dared him to come on

and fight. At first Brother and I thought to rescue Cannon from what we believed would be his sure death. But we were wrong; for Henry regarded the little brown cock contemplatively, snapped his bill in warning, then blinked and turned away as if overcome with boredom. But Cannon was not used to being ignored. If his enemies would not fight, they must at least give way before him. So his neck ruff distended more and more, his tiny comb glowed an angry red, and in his best game-cock fashion he hopped up and down stiffly, trying to strike at the heron's broad, feathered breast above him.

Henry eyed him curiously, almost saturninely, and at last with a sort of wearied annoyance gave one sweep of his broad bill, and Cannon was sent tumbling in a scurry of brown feathers and outraged squawks. But he was a

warrior; back he came in a series of frenzied leaps, and once more Henry's massive bill swept him lightly but conclusively aside.

Time after time, to the number of twelve, Cannon came charging in a whirlwind of feathers, trying to slash the feathered breast of his passive enemy, always to be met by the calm but decisive buffet of Henry's beak. At last it was a wearied little bantam cock who stopped pantingly and turned his back upon the gray heron, owning himself defeated.

Perhaps it was respect for Henry's superior prowess which actuated Cannon, and perhaps the merry little bantam's pluck appealed to the grave fisher bird, for they became almost at once inseparable friends. Cannon deserted his feathered acquaintances and spent his time in the back-yard with Henry. When finally the invalid was

well enough to hobble down on the float, Cannon went with him and would stand beside him while Henry, the heron, swooped joyfully upon minnows and silver smelt and gobbled them down with a zest he had never displayed when fishing in the washtub. Such became the intimacy of the tall Henry and the diminutive Cannon that Henry would even share his catch with Cannon, dropping down upon the float a small, wriggling fish for Cannon's delectation.

We noticed that at first the bantam rooster eyed askance the flapping tidpits offered by his friend. He was not accustomed to such lively food, but little by little he learned to peck and devour the fish with the same relish that Henry showed for them. He became a feathered parasite, depending almost entirely upon the heron for his meals.

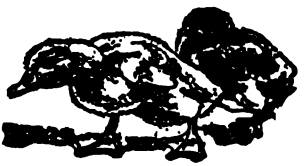
It was such a pleasant friendship—comradeship between man and man always is—and it was broken up, I am sorry to say, in the usual way—by a woman.

As Henry grew stronger, his leg and wing knit rapidly. And on the day when the Old Fisherman removed the bandages and pronounced the patient out of danger, we feared our heron friend would leave us. But he did not. He had become accustomed to the float, to the cabin, to the yard, and to Brother and me. Above all, there was Cannon, the bantam rooster. So he stayed with us, flapping up into the fir-tree in the front yard at night to roost, and fishing from the float or the beach in the daytime. It was an idyllic state of affairs which might have lasted indefinitely had it not been for Sironda, the Black Minorca hen.

"Si" we sometimes called her for

short, and we had known her from the day of her birth. Even before that; for Brother and I had set the very egg in the incubator from which she was hatched. She was a trim little hen with shiny black feathers, a red comb that fell coquettishly over one eye, and a "singing voice" that made her the prima donna among the poultry. She was in every respect fitted to make an impressionable cockerel forget the ties of friendship, and Brother and I have always believed that she mapped out a campaign to that end after seeing how well Cannon fared by trailing at Henry's heels.

She took to wandering down upon the float, singing softly to herself and ostensibly on the lookout for bugs, but, as we noticed, keeping an eye upon Cannon and his fisher friend and always drawing nearer and nearer to the pair.



Finally she grew so bold as to come up to Cannon's side, and when Henry, the heron, next dropped a shining smelt upon the float, the bantam, innately chivalrous, voiced a high-pitched invitation to Sironda to partake of the dainty.

Cannon, watching her, was content to have her devour the juicy morsel, but not so was Henry. He would fish willingly for Cannon, but not for his lady friends, and with one hair-raising scream he opened his huge bill, spread his wings and lunged for Sironda, who dropped the remnants of the fish and fled down the float, half running, half flying, and uttering hysterical cackles.

Cannon watched her precipitous retreat with a surprised and worried countenance; then he turned upon Henry. And though Brother and I could not hear what was said, I am sure that there were fierce words be-

tween them, for Henry had to knock Cannon down three times in rapid succession before the irate bantam turned heel and followed Sironda up the float and into the yard.

The rift in the lute had come, and it grew wider. For Sironda became bolder in her advances, and Cannon, flattered by her feminine wiles, laid his fish—of Henry's catching—at her feet. It was a triangle situation which could end only in one way. For at the end of each one-sided fight Cannon would stalk away with outraged dignity in every ruffled feather, and Henry would gaze after him sadly and would thereafter peck at the swarms of silver smelt solemnly and without zest.

And so he left us. One day he tried his massive wings and sailed upward and outward into the blue sky, circled in midair as if trying his strength, and then flapped quietly away toward the

Pointing Finger, and as he flew, he uttered a mournful cry that trailed behind him like a wisp of smoke.

And Cannon, the thankless one, did not even know that he had gone. He was scratching worms for Sironda. But I really think it broke Henry's heart, for he never came to our float again. And I am positive that he became a woman-hater and remained a bachelor the rest of his life.

Part Six

His constant barking set the grown-ups against him.

STOP THIEF

IN the days when the roving fisher boats chugged into the little cove to set their nets for salmon or silver smelt, we spent most of our time on the bay. We knew every broad-beamed gray launch that rounded Green Point, a mile away, and we knew most of the fishermen who owned them. We would wait until the coughing engine was silent and the anchor was cast; then we

would hoist the sail of our tiny, round-bottomed skiff and, using an oar for a rudder, skim out across the ruffled surface of the bay to pay a visit to the swarthy-visaged men with heavy, grizzled beards and rough, red hands. They always made us welcome in their strange and guttural tongues, for we took them apples from the orchard, and sometimes a glass of jelly or a loaf of home-made bread. And in exchange they gave us curious souvenirs of their travels—dried starfish of monstrous size, lovely, iridescent shells, and reed baskets bartered from the Siwash Indians.

The boat we knew best was called *Rosenzweig,* which, the Austrian owners said, meant "Rose-branch." These two fishermen, dark, powerful men, anchored just beyond our float in the smelt and salmon seasons, and we were fond of them. They let us help them

haul in the nets, and more than once Brother and I have stood in huge hip boots many sizes too large, tugging at wet ropes heavy with seaweed, excitedly pulling at the drag net and watching for the first glint of splashing silver in the brown meshes which would tell us that the net was nearly to the beach and filled with fish.

We were always sorry to see the *Rosenzweig* leave us, and it was always a day of rejoicing when we sighted the little gray boat chugging around the Point, its bow and stern piled high with seine and drag nets. The two fishermen brought us a gift each time—we expected it. Sometimes it would be a bunch of letters with Austrian stamps attached — Brother and I were confirmed philatelists; sometimes it was a sugar-cured salmon, and once they brought us a carved canoe paddle which they had pur-

STOP
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chased of a Nittenat chief, far up the straits toward Alaska.

But the day of days was when, coming alongside their gray boat just as the anchor splashed, we were greeted by Andrin, the elder brother, who grinned delightedly and signified in his broken English that he had something wonderful for us.

We clambered over the gunwale of the *Rosenzweig,* with its littered deck and its heavy, perpetual smell of fish, seaweed, and tar calking, and Karl, the younger fisherman, made us shut our eyes while he carried something up from the hold and put it on the deck, something that thrashed about wetly and barked in a high-pitched baby voice much like a puppy's.

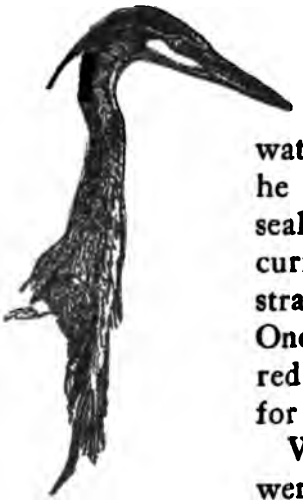
We opened our eyes and stared in amazement. For there, before us on the deck, was a baby seal! He was wet and shiny brown, with great,

bright eyes that peered at us curiously, but without fear, and delicate nostrils with neat, gentlemanly whiskers protruding from each side. With his tiny fore-flappers he propelled himself along the deck, barking constantly. Andrin threw him a piece of dried fish, which he caught in the air and devoured instantly.

"We bring you nice present," said Karl, showing his white teeth in a smile, and he indicated the baby seal, who reared himself up as high as he could on his front flappers and barked vociferously.

That we were delighted goes without saying. We had seen many seals from a distance, but never had we thought to have one for a friend.

Often one would pop out of the water in the wake of our boat as we rowed to town, his wet, sleek head blackly silhouetted against the blue



water. And if we whistled or called, he would follow us indefinitely, for seals have more than their share of curiosity. They are interested in strange sounds and in bright colors. Once, when Brother was wearing a red sweater, a seal followed our boat for nearly a mile.

We had often known when they were near us in the Bay even without seeing them. For when we saw a salmon jumping many times, in a series of frenzied leaps, we knew it was not through sport, but because he was pursued by a seal who would surely seize him the minute his strength gave out. We had seen salmon nets spread in the water with only a row of fish heads remaining in the meshes. Robber seals had neatly bitten off the rest of the body. Once, while Brother and I were swimming far out from the float, a smooth, heavy body brushed against

mine, and I screamed with fear. But an instant later a brown, wet head arose not twenty yards away, and two bright eyes were turned on me inquiringly as if to ask why I had been frightened.

You see, we were well acquainted with the seal family at long distance, but never before had we been so close to one of the brown brethren.

I took a piece of fish from Karl's hand and stooped toward the baby seal, who turned his head from side to side, sniffed once or twice, and then dragged himself along the deck to me, taking the friendship offering gingerly from my outstretched fingers. A little later he found a warm, sunny place on a pile of nets and turned over on his back, scratching himself negligently with one of his fore-flappers.

Karl said he would not take it amiss if we scratched him under the chin.

and indeed he did not. He stretched his head back and closed his eyes, while we gently stroked the glossy fur, which, as it dried, became gray rather than brown in color.

The fishermen told us that the baby seal had attended a net-robbing expedition with his mother. Both the lady seal and her baby had become entangled in the nets. The mother had fought and had finally escaped. But the baby they had loosed from the heavy meshes, and had taken him, barking and protesting, on board the *Rosenzweig,* where they had kept him in the hold, first as a prisoner and then as a pet, to bring to Brother and me.

I know they were sorry to part with Alfred, as we christened the little seal, but they needed the hold of their small boat for their catches of fish. They could not afford to turn it permanently into a bath-tub for a water-baby who

could not live long away from the element to which he was accustomed. So when the *Rosenzweig* chugged away a few days later, Alfred was left to our care, with a hundred instructions as to how to regulate his diet and behavior.

The grown-ups were none too pleased at our latest pet, and it was a tribute to Alfred's winning ways that he finally established himself as firmly in their affection as in ours. For there was no doubting his intelligence, handicapped as it was by his unwieldy body that seemed half fish and half animal.

He learned to respond to his name sooner than most dogs, and he displayed his love for us in a manner which was unmistakable. At first we were afraid to let him go into the bay for fear he would swim away and leave us. We did not know how large seals had to be before they could earn their

living in the water, but we chose to think—selfishly perhaps—that Alfred was too small to make his way in a submarine contest of wits against older and more experienced of his kindred.

We need not have worried, however, for the baby seal adopted us in the same spirit that we had adopted him. He evidently had no thought of leaving us. The float in front of the cabin was his headquarters, and from it he would slide off into the water, rolling and splashing like a young dolphin, to return when he was tired or when we called him.

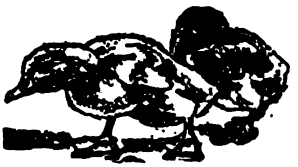
I can see him now, his small, sleek head, with its great brown eyes, sticking up out of the water, at our call pointing for the float like a periscope; lifting himself by his wet fore-flappers with their short, clicking nails and dragging himself toward us, leaving in his wake a trail of salt water.

It was his constant barking which at first had set the grown-ups against him, so we made him refrain from it. He learned that when we said, with finger upraised reprovingly, "Alfred, less noise!" he must be quiet, or there would be no piece of dried fish for him, no bottle of milk, and no gumdrops.

It might not have been necessary to bring Alfred up on the bottle, especially as the fishermen of the *Rosenzweig* had been feeding him dried fish ever since they had caught him, but our experience with other baby animals had convinced us that milk was a pleasant if not absolutely essential form of food. So we trained Alfred to drink from a bottle with a rubber nipple, and he loved it. He broke the first two, banging them down on the float, so Brother and I devised

a padded bag for it. From this Alfred daily took his milk, blinking his great, shining eyes at us and pausing occasionally to bark. We came to know it for his sign of approval.

The gum-drops were given to him experimentally. Brother maintained that the Esquimaux lived on them, and that Alfred, being a relative of northern fur-bearing seals, would doubtless thrive on the same diet. His reasoning may have been faulty in theory, but in practise it was amazingly successful. Many a time did Brother and I row the three miles to town for the special purpose of purchasing gum-drops for Alfred. He seemed to know instinctively when we had the candy with us, for when, in returning, we reached the Pointing Finger, half-way between Green Point and the cove, we could make out a black speck on the float



ahead of us, a speck that wriggled and flopped and finally slid down into the water. Then we would see a round dot against the blue little waves of the bay, a dot that resolved itself into a sleek, brown head, and there would be Alfred, swimming toward the boat, lifting himself as high out of the water as he could, his eyes fixed upon us beamingly. We always made him wait until we reached the float and moored the boat, then we would toss him the candy a piece at a time, making him catch it in mid-air.

As Alfred grew older and larger, we trained him to do some of the things we had seen his kindred do in the circuses. And how eager he was to learn! He put Brother and me to shame, for we hated lessons. He loved them. We taught him to balance an indoor baseball on the tip of his brown nose, and when he saw us coming down the float

with his ball in our hands, he would set up a hilarious barking and wriggle over to us, his head moving up and down in an ecstasy of anticipation. There was no barking, though, when he went through his tricks. If Alfred had been a man, his power of concentration would have made him a millionaire. He would sit, moment after moment, posing the ball on his nose, flexing his body from side to side to keep the balance, his bright, intelligent eyes fixed steadily on the leathern sphere.

We taught him to "play dead," to dive from a high springboard, and to fetch us a stick that we threw into the water.

Some people say there is nothing in heredity. I am sure there is. I do not pretend to be an expert on the question, but I can account in no other way for Alfred's deflection from the path of

respectability. It was certainly not because of lack of nourishment that he took to robbing seine nets of salmon. I am rather inclined to think it was his mother's waywardness which was cropping out in him. At any rate, he took to making nocturnal excursions, and in the morning we would find him on the float, stretched out listlessly, his stomach actually distended by too much food, and he would eye with disdain the padded bottle of milk and the pieces of griddle cake we had brought for his breakfast.

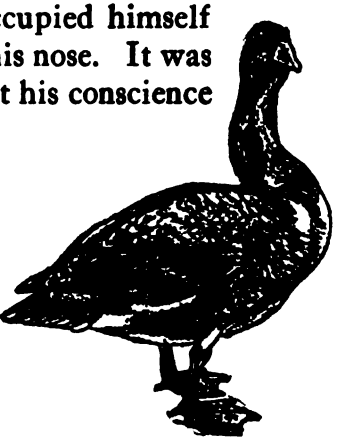
Still we did not suspect that our friend had become a net robber until the Old Fisherman descended on us one morning with wrath in his eye. He told us of having made the rounds of his salmon nets the night before to find the bodies neatly snipped from half a dozen king salmon. He had even caught the fish burglar in the act

of amputating a Chinook salmon's silver body from its head, and the seal had stared at him in the lantern light and had barked at him.

That it was Alfred, he was sure. Brother and I demurred that one seal was much like another. But no, said the Old Fisherman; this was a small seal, a seal unafraid of people, an impudent, half-grown seal—Alfred!

"And he chose the best fish o' the lot," he fumed. "If he'd taken a dog-salmon, now—but no, he has to pick out the kings, the steel-heads and the Chinooks!"

We faced Alfred and charged him with suspicion of robbery. It seemed to us that he avoided our questioning eyes. He flapped over to his ball at the side of the float and occupied himself in trying to hoist it on his nose. It was perfectly clear to us that his conscience was clouded with guilt.



What to do? We loved Alfred dearly, but we loved the Old Fisherman, too, and his living depended upon the hauls of fish he made. A scanty living it was at best, and we could not bear the thought of being even indirectly the cause of poverty descending upon him.

We built a wire cage in which we confined Alfred the next night, much against his will. And the Old Fisherman reported in the morning that no salmon had been stolen. But the following night heredity and appetite proved stronger than the wire netting we had devised, and Alfred robbed the seine net, near the Pointing Finger, of three large steel-heads.

The question of turning Alfred loose was a difficult one. We had never restrained him in any way, and our float and the beach beside it were the only homes he knew. The Old Fisherman

spoke of killing, but that was against the law, since the seals of Puget Sound are considered in the same class with sea-gulls and other scavengers. Besides, Brother and I would never have permitted such a thing. Alfred was our friend. Somewhat of a reprobate, it is true, but after all, he had as much right to the salmon in the Bay as had the Old Fisherman. It was not his fault that he could not understand the man-made ethics by which human beings assumed control over the water and its inhabitants.

Then the next morning, as if in response to prayer, the *Rosenzweig* came chugging around Green Point. Hardly had its anchor splashed when Brother and I were easing our boat alongside and clambering up to the smelly deck.

We told Karl and Andrin, all in a breath, how Alfred, the seal baby, had

grown up to be a salmon thief, just like his mother. We told how sorry we were for the Old Fisherman, and how we could not seem to explain to Alfred about controlling his appetite.

Karl and Andrin took counsel with each other. We hung hopefully upon the strange foreign sentences that we could not understand. Then Karl grinned broadly. They were going to buy a new boat, he said, a bigger boat. They could fix a sort of a tank for Alfred, wherein he could submerge himself in water. There would be no question of fish; he would have his fill of them. They had missed him, Karl said. He had been "such a smart babee!"

So Alfred left us as he had come to us—on board the *Rosenzweig*. He nuzzled against my hand like a dog as I gave him a gum-drop, and his shining eyes were fixed on me with so much

affection in them that I had to blink hard to keep from crying. He had forgotten Karl and Andrin. His heart was plainly in our keeping.

But the parting had to be. It was with sorrowful faces that we watched the *Rosenzweig* weigh anchor and commence to chug out into the current.

Brother and I stood on the float, trying to pretend to each other that we weren't down-hearted, when suddenly I spied between the boards Alfred's ball.

"Oh," I cried, "he must have that to remember us by."

We piled into the little white boat and, pulling on the oars with all our might, set out in pursuit of the gray fishing launch. Our cries finally reached Karl and Andrin, for the engine stopped, and in a few minutes we came alongside.

"Alfred's ball!" we explained

breathlessly. "He'd be lonesome without it."

And at the sound of our voices, we heard a high-pitched barking from the hold. It was Alfred, who was calling to us as best he knew how, begging us not to leave him, asking us to please take him home with us—

We did not wait for the fishermen's thanks. We were on the verge of tears. So the engine started again its steady drumming, the propeller churned the water into green and white whirlpools, and the *Rosenzweig* made out towards the Straits, while our little boat rocked gently in her wake.

And then, as we sat there, a sleek brown head appeared out of the water not a dozen yards from the stern—a shiny seal head with brilliant, intelligent eyes. It was not Alfred, of course, but for an instant we thought it might be. For the space of a few breaths the

eyes watched us intently, then the head disappeared from sight.

"I'll bet it was Alfred's mother," said Brother solemnly, "wanting to know what we'd done with her child."

"Well," said I, "what has happened is her own fault. If only she hadn't made a robber of him!"

Part Seven

O'HENRY, THE QUAIL BABY

Part Seven

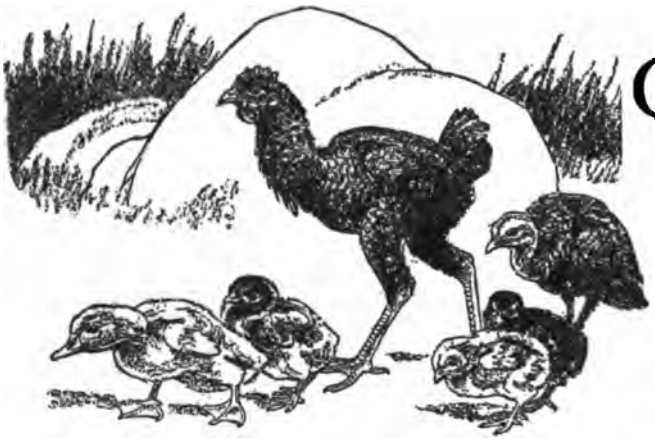
O'HENRY *The* QUAIL BABY

If Clarence had been a man, he

IT WAS upon the Hill Trail that Brother and I came to know O'Henry, the Quail Baby. You would have liked our Hill Trail. It ran from the old logging chute, just at the top of the hill above the cabin, straight through woods of pine and fir until it ended at Bright Creek, two miles distant, a tur-

Part Seven

O'HENRY
The QUAIL BABY



would have endowed orphanages.

bulent little stream full of rapids and miniature waterfalls, where the lady salmon fought their way up through the fresh water to deposit their eggs. The Hill Trail was bordered by ferns and salal bushes, with delicate, overhanging red huckleberry bushes and rows of young alders who whispered to each other all day like children in church. On either side of the brown

ribbon that was the trail a carpet of grass and green moss stretched back into the deep woods, and tapestries of twin-flower vines and wild blackberry bushes hung from stump and fallen tree. The sunlight slanted down through the tall pines and touched the trail with tapering fingers of light as if it loved it. Even in the hottest summer there was always a little breeze that stirred the alders into sleepy gossip and set the pine-trees humming gently to themselves. There was the scent of pine-needles, of fallen leaves, of wet moss.

We loved the Hill Trail best on the drowsy days of summer, when the shadows of the trees were long and cool, and the gentle splash of the tiny waterfall deep in the woods came like distant music. It was on such a day that we lay in the cool, deep moss near the Fairy Ring and stared through in-

terlacing branches at the blue patchwork sky. We heard the tap-tap of a woodpecker not far away, the drowsy hum of a bee, and the shrill twittering of a flock of juncoes who were flying overhead. Then from afar came a call that we knew and loved, the deep woods call of the quail, with its three clear notes which said, as we imagined, "Oh, *Hen*-ry! Oh, *Hen*-ry!"

The Chinook Indians say that long ago a lady quail was unfaithful to her mate, but afterward repented. Her husband never forgave her, however, and would not come back to her, so now she goes through the forest calling plaintively to him, "Oh, *Hen*-ry!"

As we listened, the quail call came nearer, then a faint, almost imperceptible scurry of leaves that told us that a bevy of the little brown birds was close at hand. Indeed, closer at hand than we thought, for at that instant a

mother quail tripped out from the underbrush and at sight of us stopped short with an imperative danger note, sounded, as we suspected, in warning to the children who were following her. We had not moved, but the mother heart was filled with terror. There was a whir of wings, and she rose in the air for a short distance, then fell, crashing heavily into a clump of fern.

"She's hurt," said Brother in a low tone, and quietly yet quickly we rose to our feet, our one thought to aid the little brown lady in her distress. But as we came near her—so near that my outstretched hand almost touched her—she fluttered away out through the clearing and down the trail, one wing dragging piteously.

Of course you must know it was only a trick. Brother and I should have known it, for we had heard of it many

times. But such was the excellent acting of the brown mother bird, with her trailing wing, her helpless fluttering, and pitiful little cries, that we never questioned her sincerity. Half a dozen times we almost touched her, and each time she eluded us and fluttered a few feet ahead. Then suddenly with triumphant whir of strong wings she rose in a graceful arc and disappeared in the thickness of the forest shadows.

We stood and laughed—a little ruefully, for we prided ourselves upon our woodcraft. Then I touched Brother's arm as a thought came to me.

"Her children are back by the Fairy Ring," I told him. "Let us hide there and see if she will return to them."

So down the trail we sped, across the little clearing, and stooped behind a thick screen of salal bushes. Nor had we long to wait, for presently there was a soft flutter of wings, a scut-

tle of leaves, and out from the underbrush, at almost the very spot where we had first seen her, came the mother quail uttering a soft, piping call which meant "Danger is past; all's well!"

As if by magic, a dozen tiny brown bodies scurried out from under leaves, baby birds the size of bantam chicks. They eddied around and behind her like little leaves in the wind, and she spoke to them in soft, maternal notes, telling them perhaps of the two fierce humans from whom she had saved them by exposing herself to capture.

But quails can not count, it seems. For when the little brown mother tripped daintily away into the deep greenery of the fern brake with her brood at her heels, we heard a tiny, piping cry so small as to be only a dot of sound. Following it, we came upon the place where Mrs. Quail's children had hidden themselves, and there we

found a baby quail whose tiny legs had been caught in a twin-flower vine, and who was trying to wrench himself free with all his little might. It was but the work of an instant to release the little dark-brown puffball, and as I held him in my hands he peeped shrilly and mournfully.

We could not bear the thought of leaving him there in the woods on the chance that his mother would hear him and come to him. Perhaps our doubt of her was unjust, but at any rate I carried him down the Hill Trail, through the orchard, and to the little log cabin. Cupped warmly in my hands, he went to sleep, and when he woke up, he forgot that he had been frightened, for he was a very tiny quail, and his life had been so brief that he had not had time to learn the great fear which all too soon becomes a part of every woods creature's life.

That night we put him in a little box with warm flannel covers over him, which we hoped would take the place of his mother's feathers, and the next morning we thought to give him into the keeping of some philanthropic hen to rear with her own children.

O'Henry, the Quail Baby, did not know that he was not a chicken; but the hens knew the difference, and there was not one lady among them, I am sorry to say, who would stretch her maternal spirit to include him in her family. We tried him on Sironda, the black Minorca hen, who had obligingly hatched out and mothered everything, from Barred Plymouth Rock chicks to white Pekin ducklings, and who had even reared a family of lanky young turkeys. But although Sironda was fussily attentive to her own brood of three-day-old chicks, she clucked sharply when we shoved O'Henry in

under her spreading wings, and tried to scalp him with a vigorous peck.

Nor would Liberty, the bantam hen, accept him as a foster child. She squawked as if he were some vicious animal, and only prompt attention on our part saved him from a terrible death.

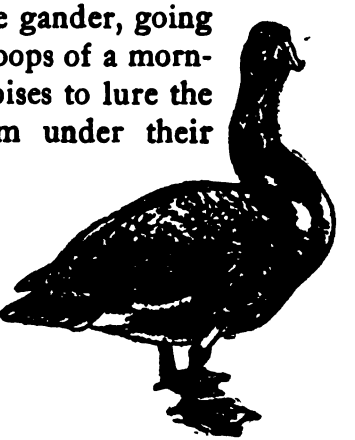
So we brought up O'Henry by hand and built for him a wire pen where he could spend his days. We dared not let him loose in the poultry yard, for it seemed that every hen, matron and maiden lady alike, resented the presence of the little woods stranger and would have rejoiced in scalping him.

Brother and I lightened O'Henry's captivity as much as we could. We taught him to come to us when we whistled his family call, and we would carry him about on our shoulders, balancing there like a tight-rope performer. We took him with us when

we rowed in our little boat on the bay, and he would perch on the bow, keeping himself upright with fluttering wings and tail, cocking his tiny head on one side when the sea-gulls flew over, and uttering at times a faint and thoughtful note.

However, it was really due to Clarence, the gray gander, that O'Henry's life became a happy one at the cove. Clarence was full of years and dignity, and a born philanthropist. If he had been a man, he would have endowed orphanages and given newsboy dinners. As it was, he had a passion for fathering the young things of the poultry yard, much to the dismay of the various mothers.

There was never a queerer sight than Clarence, the huge gander, going the rounds of the hen-coops of a morning, making coaxing noises to lure the young chicks out from under their



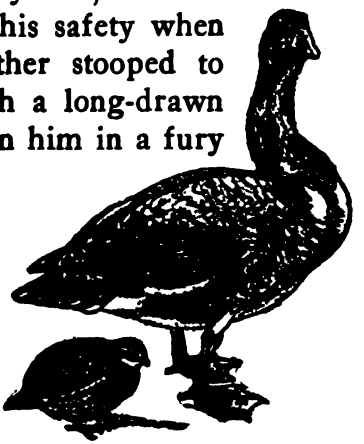
mothers' wings. The mother hens were imprisoned to prevent their scratching in the garden, and Clarence would shovel at the ground with his broad flat bill and pretend to drop a worm or bug in front of the coop, with the result that half of the lady hen's brood would be at his heels ready to follow where he led. His charges were always well fed, for Clarence was an excellent provider, but the wear and tear on the feelings of the mothers must have been terrific.

It was inevitable that sooner or later the gray gander should discover O'Henry and make him one of his family. We found Clarence in the yard one morning, a dozen odd-sized chickens at his webbed heels. There were two Minorca chicks that belonged to Sironda, half a dozen white Leghorn children, a tiny cockerel with budding wings and tail who was

Liberty's son, and a lanky young Plymouth Rock rooster, all run to legs.

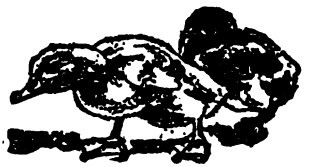
We were minded to see what Clarence would think of our pet, and we let O'Henry out of his pen. The gray gander waddled over toward the tiny brown bird, his feathered tail wiggling from side to side, and made some hospitable noises in his throat. Then he pulled up a tuft of grass and dropped it before the Quail Baby by way of getting acquainted. The chicks set upon it noisily, while O'Henry watched them, his little head upraised, his tiny black eyes fixed on Clarence's friendly bulk.

We had no idea of letting him go gipsying with Clarence, for he had become a well-loved playmate, and we could not be sure of his safety when away from us. Brother stooped to pick him up, but with a long-drawn hiss Clarence was upon him in a fury



of flapping wings and snapping bill. He did not suffer his charges to be molested while in his care; that was clear.

So we allowed O'Henry to go jaunting with Clarence and his feathered crew. Daily the gray gander would come into the yard with his motley family in tow, and having gathered up O'Henry, they would be off through the meadow, up into the orchard, not to return until the setting of the sun. They would come straggling back in sleepy Indian file, the gray gander at the head of the line, the chicks cheeping fretfully and glad to nestle under the feathers of their distracted mothers. We would watch for O'Henry and whistle the call he knew. He would come to us with his quick, darting run and we would take him into the house for the night. His crop was always crammed disgracefully, and his eyes were heavy with sleep.



Sometimes O'Henry heard the call of the wild, and we wondered when he would obey it. He had grown from a baby bird to a beautiful brown gentleman quail, with white stripes running from his throat down over his breast like a vest. He had a tiny topknot that lifted in moments of excitement, and a clear "Bobwhite" whistle that Brother and I imitated, much to his annoyance.

We would hide from him behind the rose-bush and whistle. He would come running, his head stretched out in front of him, and on seeing us would hunch his head in between his shoulders and blink at us reproachfully.

When summer passed and autumn came to the cove, O'Henry was the only one of Clarence's family who still remained with the gray gander. The chicks and ducklings had gradually grown to adulthood and forgotten the kindly gander who had fathered them.

But O'Henry still joined Clarence in his daily excursions to the orchard or the meadow.

Then one day, late in the fall, O'Henry went back to the woods. We grieved for him, because we loved him and because he had chosen the hardest time of the year in which to return to wild life he knew only by instinct. We went along the Hill Trail whistling "Oh, *Hen-ry!*" But if he heard the call he disregarded it. He never came to us.

Clarence was inconsolable. Day after day he would waddle into the back-yard where O'Henry's empty pen still stood, walk around it, peer through the wire mesh, and make seductive noises of invitation. Brother and I tried to explain to him that our baby quail had grown up and had gone back to his kindred of the woods, but Clarence only hissed at us

and regarded us balefully. I think he suspected us of having made away with his little comrade.

One day the snow came, early for the Sound country, and Brother and I, climbing the trail to the top of the hill, saw the familiar three-line imprints of the quail track. We thought of O'Henry, our lost friend; we hoped he was warm and that his crop was full of food.

Then one morning we heard the familiar "quit quit" of the quail very near at hand. The sound came from an empty hen-house, and when we approached it silently and peered through a crack, what should we see there but a bevy of twenty quail—and O'Henry in their midst! He had not forgotten us after all! He had brought his friends and relatives back to the place of his childhood, where he was sure of a welcome for them.

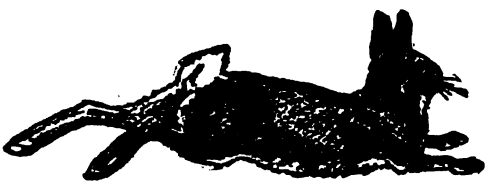
Our hands filled with cracked wheat and mixed grain, we came to the door of the shed, softly whistling, "Oh, *Hen*-ry!" He came, as in former days, running to us with his head stuck out in front of him, and with a soft whir of wings was upon my shoulder, pecking contentedly at the wheat I offered him, and wiping his bill on my cheek.

All through the weeks of snow and cold we fed O'Henry's clan, and they learned that we were not to be feared. They surrounded us like chickens whenever we came into the shed, for O'Henry's trust in us had inspired their confidence. Not only did they become accustomed to us, but to Clarence as well. For the lonely gray gander caught sight of O'Henry one morning, and waddled over to him, wiggling his excuse of a tail, shoveling the ground with his flat, yellow bill, and expressing his delight in

husky quacks. The other quail at first took alarm, and there was much whirring of wings and scurrying of tiny feet. But the gray gander soon proved to them that his intentions were of the best. He merely wished to provide for them. So all those weeks when we fed our "boarders," as we called them, Clarence stayed in the shed with the quail family, grubbing busily at the bare ground, finding little, but making up for the scarcity of food in kindly endeavor.

When the snow melted, O'Henry's tribe went back to the woods—and with them went Clarence. One day we saw O'Henry and his brown cousins scurrying up the hill, darting under ferns and bushes, calling to each other happily—and in their wake was Clarence, the fatherly gander, flattered into thinking that he was leading the way.

It was a quaint sight, and we did not



try to bring him back because we thought he would return at sunset. But he did not. He disappeared into the woods with the quail family, and we never saw him again. Long afterward, hunters told us of seeing a gray gander with a flock of quail—and they had forborne to shoot.

So we lost two friends at once, but we tried to believe that they were happy together. How Clarence accustomed himself to the ways of the wild, I do not know. But I do believe that somewhere the gray gander still lives with O'Henry, and I can think of no better protector for the quail baby and his family.

Part Eight

THE TALE OF TIMOTHY

Part Eight

Timothy clung to the bottle habit.

TIMOTHY, THE DIRTY BEAR

PERHAPS it is unjust to the memory of our friend Timothy that we should think of him as "the Dirty Bear." I wouldn't prejudice you against him for the world. "Dirty" has such a reprehensible sound. But Timothy was dirty in a

perfectly legitimate way. He had a primitive soul that found delight in grubbing in rotten stumps for maggots and in burrowing into the soft earth for Indian potato roots. You can see that under such circumstances he could not keep his face and paws scrupulously clean, any more than a child can who makes mud pies. He hated water—but then, so did we, unless we could take our baths in the Bay—and he had an almost fanatical fear of soap. Brother, who was then reading "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," thought Timothy might have been a reincarnation of some eccentric hermit who had vowed never to wash himself for the rest of his life.

We knew Timothy long before he knew us. We did not know him by name, but we knew where he lived, and we had what you might call

a speaking acquaintance with his mother. It happened thus:

One day, in our explorations along the creek bed at the end of the Hill Trail, we came suddenly upon a hole in the bank. It was almost covered by long, overhanging ferns, and had not a puff of wind stirred the fronds just as we were passing, we should never have known about the hole at all. It was on the opposite side of the creek, but we found a place where a fallen log bridged the little stream, and the next moment we were standing on the opposite side at the foot of the embankment, pushing the ferns aside and peering into the depths of a black and wonderfully inviting hole.

Had we thought to look, we might have seen in the sandy slope that led up to the hidden entrance the imprints of a foot almost human in shape, although not nearly so large. Footprints

that turned in toward each other—and we should have known. But our minds were filled with the fascinating possibilities of the miniature cave we had discovered. Perhaps it was a pirate den; perhaps gnomes lived there; or perhaps we were on the track of buried treasure.

On hands and knees I led the way into the inky blackness with Brother close behind me. The daylight behind was blotted out. For several yards the passageway went straight ahead, then it turned suddenly to the right; and I, turning with it, stopped so abruptly that Brother coming behind bumped into me. A curious, powerful odor enveloped us, as of darkness made odorous by furry bodies and warm by living things. Then from ahead of me not more than two yards away flashed the savage gleam of two blue-green eyes. There was a menacing growl which

set our spines to tingling, and at the same instant came the sound of whines and a movement as of baby things disturbed in their sleep. I was conscious of a sickish, fainting feeling, for I realized suddenly that we were in the house of a mother bear.

Brother needed no urging to make his exit. He was backing out on hands and knees far more quickly than he had come in, and I was prodding him along, followed by those menacing, hair-raising growls.

Why the lady bear did not attack us is more than I can tell. The brown bears of the northwestern woods are harmless and even friendly little persons, but the mother when protecting her young is more ferocious than a wildcat or a mountain lion. Perhaps Mrs. Timothy knew that our visit was unintentional and that we meditated no harm toward her or her children.

At any rate we gained the entrance of the cave untouched and unharmed, but we were breathing heavily and our knees were wobbling sadly.

Perhaps you think we should have stayed away from the house of the lady bear; but we did not. We were interested, you see, in knowing how much of a family she had, and we never went along the creek bed without leaving some offering in the shape of food at the mouth of the hole.

Sometimes it was an apple or a leaf of lettuce, and if nothing else availed, we broke off licorice root or fern and placed it there for her. It was our method of apologizing for our intrusion and of expressing our interest in the family.

One day we saw the mother bear with her children, and that is how we came to name Timothy. She was at the mouth of the cave, half asleep in the

warm sunshine, and four cubs were rolling over each other like gridiron heroes in a football scrimmage. They were squealing like young pigs, and from time to time she remonstrated against their noise by a sleepy grunt. Then, as we watched, the bear cub at the bottom of the furry pile squeezed out and stood on his hind legs. His face was covered with brown, sandy loam, and his squinty black eyes peered out as through a mask. I knew a boy who lived at the head of the Bay whose face always looked so. His name was Timothy, and that was why on the spot we so christened the bear baby.

Our next meeting with Timothy was in the nature of a near-tragedy. We were hunting for trilliums in Trillium Gulch, a hidden valley to which we ourselves had cut a path from the Hill Trail. The white, lily-like flowers starred the hillside there in the spring,

and it was our fond belief that no one came there but ourselves. Hunters and trappers go everywhere, however, violating even such a woodland paradise as ours. As we went down the narrow trail, pushing aside the light branches of the alders and the fir-trees, we heard a plaintive, whining cry almost human in its poignancy. We stopped for an instant, listening, wondering. Then we slipped softly down the path, thrust aside the interlacing ferns, and found ourselves beside the little stream which ran like a silver ribbon through Trillium Gulch. The sounds came from the left, and following their lead we rounded a boulder in the trail and came upon a sight which filled us with gasping indignation. A little brown bear with a fleck of white on his furry throat was tugging frantically and futilely at the jaws of a steel trap which held his two front

paws in a cruel, biting grip. There was blood upon the jagged clamps, and the face which the little fellow turned to us was piteous in its baby misery, a little brown face covered with loam. It was Timothy, the Dirty Bear.

I do not like even now to think of the half-hour which followed. So strong was the steel trap that the combined efforts of Brother and myself could only pry the cruel jaws apart the fraction of an inch. We were hampered, too, in our work of mercy by poor little Timothy, who, not realizing that we were trying to help him, shrieked and bit at us and scratched with his hind feet. Our hands were soon covered with blood, and there was a long, jagged line of red on Brother's face where the baby bear had clawed him. But we did not pause in our efforts. Finally, by the aid of a stout stick, we managed to open the jaws of the vicious

trap, and the poor little fellow, his front paws cruelly torn and bleeding, whimpering like a baby, sat down on his haunches and began to lick his wounded paws, stopping at intervals to hold them out in front of him like a child whose finger is hurt and wants it made well by a kiss.

Strangely enough, he was not afraid of us now, and when I took him in my arms his plaintive whimpering gradually ceased, and he licked at his paws solicitously.

No doubt we should have taken Timothy back to his mother and trusted to nature to heal his grievous hurts. But nature would take too long, and in the meantime he would suffer cruelly. He was such a little bear, you know, and had not yet achieved the stoicism which makes the older woods creatures almost indifferent to pain. So even at the cost of causing his mother a great

deal of worry at his prolonged absence, we took him down the hill with us to the log cabin to receive first aid treatment for his wounds.

That is how Timothy, the Dirty Bear, became a friend of ours. Fate in the form of a hunter prevented us from taking him back to his home in the creek bank. The poor lady bear was shot the next day. One of her cubs was captured and the other two children escaped to the woods to live as best they could. So Timothy belonged to us, and he was the merriest of playmates.

When we rescued him from the trap he was a very tiny bear, being no larger than Tinker, our black and tan rat terrier. He slept in a clothes-basket on the back porch, sometimes having for a bedfellow Three-Spot, the mottled black and white cat. Three-Spot at first had been greatly alarmed by Tim-

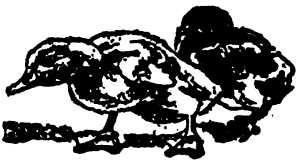
othy's rough and sportive overtures of friendship. But when she found that by boxing his ears she could correct his manners and set him to yelping with fright, she took to imposing upon his good nature by making him serve at night for a mattress. In the morning we would find the two of them curled up together, Timothy snoring gently and Three-Spot digging her paws into his soft, thick fur with a purr that was a monotone of content.

Brother and I did not know whether Timothy's mother had weaned him from a milk diet, but we felt that we would be safeguarding his digestion if we brought him up on liquid food for a time at least, so we rowed into town especially to purchase a bottle with a strong rubber nipple attached. The druggist asked if there was a baby at our house, and we told him yes—what kind of baby, we did not state.

Whether or not we were following the same system of dietetics that Mrs. Bear would have employed in bringing up her child, Timothy really did thrive on his liquid menu. Even after he outgrew the necessity for milk, he clung to the bottle habit and would sample the contents of any bottle he found. We used to bring him ginger ale from town and soda pop of all flavors. If nothing else was handy, we filled a battered old canteen with sweetened water, and he would tilt back on his hind legs, hold the canteen perpendicularly aloft, close his eyes, and drink it slowly, making funny little rumbling noises deep in his throat which, Brother maintained, were imitations of Three-Spot's purring. Once he got hold of a bottle of kerosene and had closed his eyes in anticipatory esctasy before the taste of the first terrible mouthful reached his throat. I shall never forget the look of pained

disillusion on Timothy's face. He threw the bottle from him, coughed and sputtered, gagged once or twice as if deathly sick, and then waddled off to the spring, walking pigeon-toed, and with uncomprehending anguish in the very tilt of his furry hind quarters. That should have cured him of his liking for promiscuous bottles, but it did not—as you shall see.

We worried a little at first as to what else we should give him besides milk, but we need not have concerned ourselves. Timothy's appetite was without limits, and he could eat anything—bread, meat scraps, griddle cakes, or cold potatoes. On top of the civilized food we fed him he hunted on his own account for certain roots he liked, clawed the bark from fallen logs to get the white grubs underneath, and buried his head at the foot of hollow stumps where the red ants had made their hills.



After an hour or two of such foraging, he would return to us, his face and paws besmeared with loam and covered with cobwebs, his furry coat rusty with sand and tagged by twigs and strands of blackberry vine. He would blink at us questioningly, a trifle shamefacedly, running his small red tongue along the sides of his mouth, and we would shake our heads and say mournfully, "Oh, Timothy, you dirty, dirty bear!"

After such excursions we always gave him a bath in the big washtub, and though he knew there was no escaping it, he always squealed and struggled while we lathered him and only ceased his whining when we had rinsed him and put him in the sun to dry, giving him the canteen filled with sugared water to keep him quiet.

He was the merriest playfellow we ever had. He went with us every-

where—up the Hill Trail, into the orchard, and out on the bay when we sailed our little boat and played that we were pirates. Timothy never objected to anything except a bath. We dressed him in outlandish costumes, sometimes with a red bandanna tied around his head, a shawl looped about his fat and furry body, and a wooden knife stuck in his belt. He was always ready to wrestle with us, to climb hills with us, or to be a pillow for our heads as Brother and I lay through the long, drowsy, summer afternoons and read fairy-tales aloud to each other, or described the shapes we saw in the clouds.

When the late fall came, Timothy remembered he was a bear long enough to have a desire to go to bed for the winter, but what chance had a tired bear for a seasonal sleep when living in the same house with Tinker, Three-Spot, Brother, and myself? We

would drag him from his clothes-basket while he whimpered with half-closed eyes, and Tinker would badger him into wakefulness and a game of tag. Then the four of us would go through the orchard up to the Hill Trail, pushing each other into the drifts of dead leaves and playing hide and seek around the stumps and logs.

Of course Timothy could not stay with us always; that was too much to expect. He belonged to the woods, and sooner or later he must obey their call. He had belonged to us for almost a year, and it was only right that the out-of-doors should at last claim her child. But when the call of the wild did come, we were sorry in spite of ourselves, and when Timothy's absences came more and more frequently and the intervals of time he spent with us lessened, we missed him sorely. We knew that soon our playmate would be with us no

more, that he would go back to the forest whence he came, and take up the serious business of finding a wife and of locating a tree or a hole in which to spend the next winter.

The manner of his departure was dramatic, even as was his advent into our lives. We were up on the Hill Trail, Brother and I, and we had, as we supposed, left Timothy on the back porch sleeping in his clothes-basket, for which he was now much too big, but to which he had become attached through habit. On the open trail with its sound-deadening mat of hard, brown earth we did not hear the soft, padding feet that followed us and were not aware that our friend was near at hand until we met a hunter, brown-faced and with a gun in hand, near the bend in the path that we called "U-Chu-Ka's Corner," in memory of our little rabbit friend.

The man had a red band around his hat, I remember, and a canteen was slung at his side. He had put it to his lips to drink when he caught sight of us, and suddenly his eyes widened, and the hand that held the canteen became rigid.

"Run, you kids!" he gasped out, "there's a bear behind you!"

We turned to confront Timothy, who was standing pigeon-toed in the middle of the trail, his face covered with loam from a rotten stump where he had been digging for ants, his eyes blinking at us sleepily and a trifle reproachfully for having gone off without him. But before we could explain to the hunter that the bear behind us was a friend of ours, the man had raised his gun and leveled it at our playfellow. I screamed aloud and Brother, heedless of the danger flung himself in front of the rifle.

Now Timothy knew nothing of guns, but he had long and satisfactory acquaintance with bottles and canteens. He had seen the man drink. There was something contained therein that he, Timothy, would like. The man would not mind sharing it—I'm sure he reasoned thus to himself—and in that instant when the gun was pointed straight at him, he rose on his hind feet, his furry arms outstretched, and started toward the hunter.

The man with the gun forgot to pull the trigger; he forgot everything except that a dark brown body with gleaming black eyes was advancing upon him. He gave a little squeal of terror, and the rifle dropped from his hands. He turned and fled down the trail with Timothy galloping on all fours close at his heels. In spite of our breathless calls he would not return to us, and though we ran and called and laughed

at the same time, he soon outdistanced us. When last we saw the hunter he was disappearing over the crest of a little hillock in the trail with the canteen bobbing behind him, and the hat with the red band made a dot of scarlet against the underbrush where it had fallen.

We heard afterward that the man had not stopped running until he reached the little town. Timothy by that time was nowhere in sight, having given up the pursuit of the canteen in disgust.

But we never saw him again. Perhaps returning home he met a comely lady bear and they decided to set up housekeeping together. Perhaps she even won his heart by telling him that she knew where there was a nice bottle full of sweetened water.

Long afterward we found one day by the creek bed a ginger ale bottle

dropped there by some picknickers. It was empty, and on the gravel near by we saw footprints almost human in shape, only smaller and toeing in toward each other.

We knew somehow that Timothy had been there. It was almost as if he had known we would pass that way, and had left the bottle and his footprints where we would see them to tell us that we were not forgotten, nor were the things we had taught him.

Part Nine

THE BANDIT BIRD

The BANDIT BIRD

I HOPE the fact that Hector was a chicken hawk will not prejudice you against him unduly. There are brigands, you know, who have gentlemanly instincts, and I am sure that if Hector had been a bandit chief, he would have spared women and children and given part of his plunderings to charity. After all, he was not to blame for being a hawk or for having a natural liking for live poultry. There was at times a mournful dignity about him, as if he resented the unfair workings of a fate which had made him a robber bird, a trespasser on the lives of other creatures, and at enmity with every living thing.

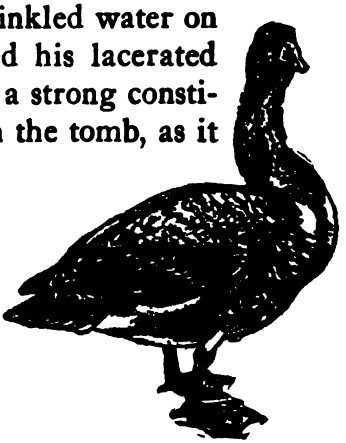
Sometimes the bandit birds swooped down

He was a beautiful hawk with gray-brown plumage, wing tips that turned slightly upward when he flew, and a fierce and royal beak curved like a scimitar. His eyes were very black, very bright, and very knowing. Most of the time they were superbly disdainful. But Brother and I have seen them when they actually seemed to smile.

It was Brother who named him, for the alliterative privilege, I suspect, of calling him "Hector, the Horrible Hawk." But that was only in fun. For

he was not horrible at all when we got to know him. Lazarus thinks otherwise, very probably. But then his experience with Hector was a trying one, and to this day—if he still lives—he carries the marks of his eventful meeting with our friend, the robber chief.

Lazarus was a pet chicken, son of Sironda, the black minorca hen. We gave him his curious name because he had a talent for venturing very near death's door, and the fact that we always saved him lent appropriateness to his name. Once when very young, no more than five days out of his shell, he was all but scalped by a rival mother hen, and when we answered his frantic baby peeps for help his head was bleeding profusely, and his eyes were closed as if in death. We sprinkled water on his tiny bill and salved his lacerated head. And he, having a strong constitution, came back from the tomb, as it



were, and lived a long and eventful life. In order to care for him better, we kept him in the back-yard, tucking him at night into a small box under flannel coverings. He thrived and grew from chickhood very sturdily, and the only ill effect that remained from his early mishap was that he was quite bald. No feathers ever came on the spot where the lady hen had scalped him, and we could have distinguished him from every cockerel of his size and color in the world by that little bare place on the top of his head.

Now, when Lazarus lost his first baby down and was in that shorn and untidy condition which always precedes the growth of real feathers, he suddenly became lonesome for the other members of the poultry yard. He would run the length of the wire fence, poking his head through the small meshes, and more than once he nearly

strangled to death by getting it caught. We always rescued him just in time to save his life. So finally we allowed him to go into the barnyard with the rest of his kindred. It was then that Lazarus had the big adventure of his already crowded career. His meeting with Hector lifted him to dizzy heights —and I am not speaking figuratively. It really did. At that, it wasn't so much a meeting as an abduction. At least Hector intended it to be such.

We were constantly on guard to keep hawks away from the ranch. They waged merciless warfare on our chickens, pigeons, and guinea-pigs, and there was always a loaded, double-barreled shotgun behind the kitchen door ready for action in case of an air raid. When we heard the frightened flapping of the pigeons as they flew in aimless circles around the cabin and barn, we knew a hawk was somewhere overhead, hover-

ing with curved-up wings and cruel, bright eyes, seeking his prey, choosing it calmly, waiting patiently the proper moment to swoop down upon it.

The chickens, too, always told us when such danger was near. Prince, the great white Plymouth Rock rooster, would set up a long-drawn cry of warning, and the hens would burst into frenzied cackling. The whole poultry yard would cock its head on one side to get a better view of the air robber, then would scoot to cover of the barn or hen-houses, every neck ruff distended. Sometimes it was a false alarm. A crow would be flying peaceably on his business, or a sea-gull would have swerved inland a bit. Prince took no chances. It was his duty to guard the poultry-yard, and he believed firmly in the policy of safety first.

But many times the warning was one

of real danger. A hawk would indeed be circling slowly above the barnyard, his bright eyes fixed calculatingly on the scurrying fowls below. Then one of the grown-ups would snatch the double-barreled shotgun from behind the kitchen door and fire at the winged plunderer. The shot, though it did not usually kill, always frightened the air robber away, and we would watch him fly lazily, almost contemptuously, off toward the hill and the thick woods, his powerful wings moving steadily and easily.

Sometimes, though, the bandit birds came and swooped down on their prey —a small chick or a baby guinea-pig— before we could prevent it. And often a bloody bunch of feathers near the rookery would testify to the murderous skill of a hawk and the sad fate of a hapless pigeon.

It was on a day when the grown-ups

had gone to town. The Old Fisherman was mending his nets down on the float in front of the cabin. It was a lazy summer day, and Brother and I were sitting on the porch steps reading—the steps that were made of roughly-hewn logs.

All at once we heard the familiar danger signal of Prince, the white rooster, and then the hens began to cackle in a very panic of fear. We dropped our books, but before we could even start for the back-yard, we heard another sound which seemed so impossible and so out of place that we listened paralyzed with astonishment. It was the shrill and frenzied peeping of a half-grown chicken in terrible distress —*and the sound came from above us!*

The next instant, as we stood staring, hardly crediting what our eyes told us, we saw a large chicken hawk fly slowly past the cabin, no higher

than the roof of the porch. He flew so slowly and at such a short distance from the earth because he was weighted down with a live and struggling young cockerel, which he held grimly in his sharp talons! There was a shout that came from our throats simultaneously, *"Lazarus!"*

For the struggling, shrilly-peeping victim was no other than our bald-headed friend whom we had saved from death half a dozen times before. His bare, gangling legs hung limply beneath him; his neck jerked spasmodically with his frantic appeals for help. His wings, with their absurd tufts of feathers, stuck out at right angles from his body, for the hawk's talons were buried in the flesh beneath them.

At the time, you may be sure, we did not wait to make any remarks on all these observations. With one thought Brother and I plunged through the

front door, back into the kitchen, and bumped into each other in our eagerness to get the gun. It was Brother who seized it first, and through the two rooms we dashed again and out into the front yard. The hawk was flying slowly and with evident difficulty—for Lazarus was a healthy, heavy youngster—across the open space that lay between the yard of the cabin and the old brickyard shed which adjoined it.

Brother, bent back almost double by the weight of the heavy weapon, pressed it against his shoulder, took careful aim, and fired. I screamed, for there were three falls. Brother tumbled backward from the kick of the shotgun. Lazarus hurtled to earth in a sprawl of legs and wings and lay there, uttering feeble, choking sounds. The hawk rocketed down, a flutter of gray-brown feathers; there was blood upon the grass where he dropped.

The Old Fisherman, hearing the commotion, came running up the float, the wooden shuttle with which he mended nets still grasped tightly in his hand.

Brother scrambled to his feet, blinking dazedly at the result of his marksmanship. Our first thought was that Lazarus was killed at last. But he was apparently only severely shaken by his fall, for presently he walked off a little dizzily, his tender skin bleeding where the hawk's talons had sunk in.

The hawk was our next consideration. Now that we had wounded him —I say "we," because I felt that the responsibility was half mine—we were sorry for his plight. He was thrashing about helplessly on the grass, one wing dragging at his side. He was trying desperately to fly, but could not so much as lift himself above the ground. His fierce, dark eyes blazed

at us, and his powerful, curved beak snapped menacingly when we approached him. But at last his strength failed him, the bleeding wing spread itself out in a fan, and he sank over on one side, his talons jerking spasmodically. As we came nearer he regarded us with eyes that were unafraid. They even seemed dull with apathy, as if he knew that the end had come and that he, like the robber aristocrat that he was, must accept it philosophically.

The Old Fisherman was for ending his life then and there. But Brother and I could not bear to have him killed, for he was at our mercy, hurt and helpless. For the first time in our lives we had deliberately wounded something that lived and had feelings even as we. The knowledge that we had fired upon him to save our friend's life was not sufficient excuse for us to allow the Old Fisherman to kill him.

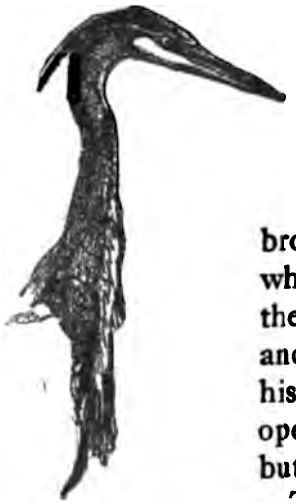
So together we caught him, tied his fierce beak so he could not snap at us, bound his powerful legs so that his talons should not tear our hands, then the Old Fisherman, grumblingly, but gently, bathed and salved the injured wing. In time it would be as good as new, he told us, but he didn't know what our folks would say to our saving the life of a "pesterin', low-lived hawk."

As he anticipated, the grown-ups were not at all pleased when they returned from town and found Hector—he had been named by that time—tied by one leg to a stake in the back-yard, his right wing sadly out of focus and smeared with a clot of blood. But it was not in their kindly hearts to kill in cold blood, so they let the hawk live.

For the first few days that Hector was in our midst he did little except to tug at the chain which bound him to the stake, slowly and automatically, like a

man taking morning exercises with rubber ropes. He hated us and repulsed our attentions fiercely and scornfully. He refused to eat the tempting bits of raw meat that we spread before him; he sulked all day with his curved beak hidden in the ruffled feathers of his breast. He was indeed like a robber chieftain in captivity. We were patient, however, for we knew that according to Hector's viewpoint we had injured him without reason. He had been in search of his dinner—a perfectly legitimate occupation for any one—and as he was carrying it off we had not only robbed him of it, but wounded him grievously. You can see that he had a great deal of logic on his side.

But little by little his haughty antagonism melted before our daily overtures. He no longer snapped at us when we came near, and began to take an active interest in the food we



brought him. There came a day when he allowed me to put my hand on the soft, smooth feathers of his head and back, and when I gently massaged his wounded wing with vaseline he opened his beak as if to bite my hand but closed it without doing me harm.

Then, wonder of wonders, Hector began to like us. When he saw us coming into the back-yard he would set up a sort of dancing, jumping up and down stiff-legged, spreading out his dark wings, and straining at the chain. His beak would snap open and shut, and his bright, black eyes seemed actually to have a smile in them. He would allow me to salve his injury with only the faintest suggestion of nervousness in his half-open beak, and on the day when we unchained his leg from the stake he sat on my hand with all the dignity of an emperor receiving his court after a long illness.

From that time on we gave Hector his liberty for a few hours each day. And always, before releasing him, we would take the precaution to feed him well. We did not intend to have any fatalities among the poultry if we could help it. But even with a full stomach, he worried the barn-yard into a daily spasm of fear. For as he regained the use of his wing, he would fly slowly, majestically, over the poultry pens, turning his head from side to side as hawks do when they are picking their prey and calculating the time for the swoop to earth. Brother and I believed firmly that Hector had no intention of snatching up a chick or a pigeon, that his daily flight was merely by way of exercise and for the dramatic satisfaction it gave him to see the feathered crew below him so disturbed.

At any rate, he never once attempted to harm any of our live stock. Per-

haps it was because we fed him so well, but Brother and I preferred to think it was because he was a gentleman, and that he would not betray our confidence when we trusted him to do the right thing.

This daily flight of Hector's was most annoying to the grown-ups, however. In the first place, the hens were not laying so well as they had. They were frightened out of all nesting desire by Hector's calm aërial promenades, and were in a continual state of nervous excitement. Then, too, when Prince gave the danger signal and all the hens ran for cover with their chicks, the grown-ups would dash out of the house each time ready to fire upon a strange marauder, only to be confronted with Hector making peaceable spirals above the hen-houses. He would come to us when we whistled shrilly, and would sit quietly on my wrist to nibble

at a piece of cooky as if he had never had a carnivorous thought in his life.

I should like to tell you that he and Lazarus became friends after the hawk had become partially domesticated, but such was never the case. Lazarus used to come stalking into the back-yard, his legs much too long for the rest of him, and a tiny, serrated, red comb sticking up from the bald spot on his head. His body was still almost bare, though a generous tuft of feathers on his tail showed where he might in time expect some real plumage. He still carried the scars of his aërial adventure under his wings. He would approach Hector cautiously, craning his neck in and out with a curious rubberized effect, and would stop at a safe distance, turning his head on one side, giving Hector a timorous inspection from the broadside of one amber eye. And Hector would return the look

scornfully, his curved beak giving him a morose, sneering expression. His whole attitude seemed to say, "Never mind, I'll get you next time!"

As Hector grew stronger and could fly better, the grown-ups gave the ultimatum that we must dispose of him in some way. It was too dangerous, they said, to have a chicken hawk around the ranch. In vain we argued that Hector was a gentleman, that he would not bother any of our poultry. But to our sorrow, they said that he should be taken to the city and presented to the zoölogical gardens there.

Brother and I told Hector what was going to happen to him, and that it was not in our power to prevent his going, and it seemed to us that he was very thoughtful afterward. We shall always believe that what happened was the direct result of the grown-ups' decision to send him into captivity,

although, you understand, we could not blame them. They had been more than kind to our somewhat dangerous guest.

The next day when we released our robber chieftain from his stake, he flew up over the cabin roof, circled once around it, then flew northward along the beach and was soon out of sight. When night came Hector did not return. And though Brother and I stood in the yard whistling until we were breathless, there was no sudden swoop of a gray-brown bird from the air, no Hector to curve sharp talons gently around my wrist.

The next morning, when we went for milk at the neighboring ranch, we knew why our friend had not come back to us. On the fence outside the barn, hung limply over the pickets just as he had fallen, was a draggled bunch of gray-brown feathers that had once been our

beautiful Hector, the Robber Chief. The wide wings were powerless now, the body was riddled with fine shot, the once proud head with its curved beak drooped pitifully. The fierce dark eyes were closed. Never again would Hector perform his dance of joy at our coming, never again would he stare appraisingly at Lazarus, or frighten the hens and pigeons with his lazy circles above their heads.

The rancher told us he had shot the hawk the day before. And he could not understand why we wept over the blood-stained bunch of feathers. He did not know that Hector was a friend of ours—and a gentleman.

Brother and I always thought that Hector deliberately courted death rather than spend his life in yearning captivity. And I, for one, am glad he did. For no one else would have understood him and loved him as we did.

Her nostrils dilated at the hated ***human scent.***

MY FRIEND THE PRINCESS

THIS is not my story, except incidentally. It is the story of a Bengal tigress named Princess, with a coat of dull gold striped with ebony. A restless, sullen tigress, padding the length of her narrow cage, with amber eyes staring out at some

vision beyond the iron bars, with tawny lips half drawn back from white, pointed fangs. A tigress with something high and noble in her steady pacing, her air of absolute detachment from everything around her. When I met her I was no longer a child living near Puget Sound, but had quite grown up and moved to California, and to city life far from my woodland friends of earlier and sweeter years.

Princess lives in a motion-picture studio's menagerie now, but there was a time when she knew the hot, marshy smell of the Bengal jungles, when she crouched, tense in every muscle, to spring upon a fat bullock, when she padded through narrow jungle trails to drink at the hidden pool which only the forest creatures knew.

She was caught in a tiger pit, they told me, when little more than a cub. She had been purchased first by a cir-

cus, and then by the motion-picture company which owns her now. They told me she was fierce and utterly without affection. And indeed she looked so, pacing back and forth in her iron-barred cage, her breath coming in a hissing snarl as she noted our presence, her amber eyes widening ever so little as she caught our scent.

Still I could not think Princess was so terrible. I could not find it in my heart to be afraid of her. I pitied her. There was something unbearably pathetic in her constant pacing. It seemed to me that I could actually feel the longing of her caged heart to be out in the open again, to lope down jungle trails, to lie stretched out on rocks warm with Indian sunshine. There was no enmity in the look she turned on us, only indifference, and—was it pleading?

It was my first visit to the studio.

And I carried away with me that picture of Princess in her cramped cage, pacing, pausing, sniffing at the air heavy with human scent, her amber eyes seeing something afar off, something we could not understand—

Then I discovered that the keeper of the menagerie was an old friend of mine. "Pudgy" he was nicknamed. He was short and rotund, and trained animals with kindness instead of whips. I had known him in the Puget Sound country when Brother and I were children. A woodsman he had been then, and with a tiny little cabin near Green Point. We had visited him often, for he shared our love for the things of the open. He had had a tame deer whose name was Nellie, and he had nursed back to health a bobcat that he had rescued from a trap in the High Sierras. It was not strange that with his love of animals

Pudgy should finally come into a position as keeper of a motion-picture menagerie. Many years had passed since we had seen each other, but when we met by chance—I was of the press—we renewed old acquaintance, and found pleasure in talking of Puget Sound and of the woods creatures we had loved.

Through him I came to know personally the animals in the menagerie. I was introduced to the Russian wolves, to the lions, to the bears, and to Princess the tigress. I think he liked her best of all the wild things there, and I am sure I did. There was something about her cheated strength, her restrained power, that made my heart go out to her. I never failed to visit her when I went to the studio, and I liked to think that she knew me and recognized me as a friend.

It was several weeks after Pudgy and I renewed our old friendship that

they told me at the studio that Princess, the glorious Bengal tigress, was to be killed. She had grown unmanageable for picture work, they said, too sullen and too treacherous. The picture in hand called for a tiger hunt. She was to be sacrificed for the sake of reality and shot down. Her pelt, they added, would be worth a great deal of money.

But I could not think of Princess in terms of a pelt that was worth money. I felt as if a human being had been sentenced to death. Because she could not find it in her royal heart to cringe beneath the trainer's lash, she was to die; because she was queenly, and unafraid, she no longer had the right to live.

I have seen the tortures wild animals go through in making pictures. How they are prodded with pointed sticks, made to jump into water from great heights, and forced to run through

blazing brush. I have seen lions and tigers struck cruelly on their sensitive noses to make them register rage. All these things had Princess suffered from trainers and directors. I did not blame her for rebelling.

I came upon Pudgy as he sat on a bench near Princess's cage, his chin in his hand, and he was staring at her while she paced restlessly back and forth with hissing intakes of breath.

"They are going to kill her," he said slowly, "just because they can't break her spirit."

I sat beside him, and together we watched Princess. Pudgy told me how he had tried to ease the fear and hatred of humans in the heart of the jungle tigress by being especially nice to her. How, when she had hurt herself jumping from a springboard into a lake with sharp rocks in it, he had gone into the cage and bathed the swollen

paw, and how she had licked his hand with her huge, grating tongue. Once she had had a swelling on her throat; he was the only one whom she suffered to minister to it. And again, when she had sickened with fever, he had stayed in her cage a night and a day, moistening her tongue with water and watching until her eyes lost their glazed stare and became normal once more.

"And they're going to kill her," he repeated slowly, "just because she can't understand the treatment they've given her—because she's not afraid of their whips any more."

His voice almost broke. And my heart went out to him and to the tawny wild thing in the barred cage. If he could only make the Powers understand, I told him. If only he could make them realize that Princess was not wantonly ferocious, only tortured into savagery by unkind treatment.

He shook his head. The Powers, he said, understood nothing that did not have a dollar mark attached.

So the day was set when Princess was to die. It was to be in the out-of-door arena, an oval piece of ground enclosed in upright bars and strong steel wire. At the back was a miniature thicket of bamboo, ferns, and marsh grass. At the front was the camera cage, strongly barred to prevent danger from the wild animals being photographed in action.

My visit to the menagerie that day was accidental. I did not know that the tigress was to be killed. I had only been told that an interesting picture was being made in the arena. So I pushed my way through the double line of carpenters, actors, and onlookers, to the very bars of the huge out-of-door cage. The camera man was already in his barred enclos-

ure, and inside the arena the director, a slim-waisted man with a black mustache, was outlining the action of the scene to the hero of the picture, who, attired in a hunting costume, dabbed at his face with a yellow powder-puff.

"The tiger comes bounding out of the jungle," the director was saying, "and you shoot from behind that log. Never mind if you don't get her the first shot. I'll have my gun on her, and I'll finish her off. There's no danger."

My heart stopped and then thumped painfully. I had stumbled unknowingly on the scene of Princess's execution. I felt sickened. I could not bear to stay and see her shot at—wounded first by an ill-aimed rifle, then fired upon until she dropped, an inert mass of tawny gold and black—

I turned away, tried to press through the crowd. But there were too many people. Every one from the studio had

ceased work to come and see the spectacular death of Princess, the Bengal tigress.

I was dimly aware that men were rolling a cage on wheels up to the side entrance of the arena. From between the bars I caught a glint of sunlight on a body of savage beauty. I saw, too, the white, drawn face of Pudgy, standing by the side of the cage.

Some one opened the side gate of the arena. The director and the actor were still talking. The director was showing graphically how the other should come out of the jungle, should listen for the tigress's coming, should drop behind the log and fire—

What happened then I can scarcely remember. It was all so sudden, so breath-taking. A confusion of signals had been the cause, they told me afterward. The man at the cage thought the opening of the arena gate was the

signal to release Princess—and he had opened the door of her cage!

There was a shout that died away in a gasp of many breaths, a silence that was like a great commotion—for Princess, the royal Bengal tigress, crashed through the flimsy greenery of the mimic jungle and like a tawny statue stopped short, her head raised, her amber eyes wide.

It was a nightmare, that terrible instant. No one moved. The director's face went pasty white, the actor's red-lined mouth had fallen open. There in that oval cage the two puny men faced the magnificent creature of the wilds, faced the animal they had planned to kill—and they were helpless.

Only the briefest moment did the tableau last. For Princess's nostrils dilated with the hated human scent, her eyes narrowed to slits, her nose

wrinkled back, and she snarled. The director was speaking jerkily without moving—saying that no one must scream—telling some one to bring the gun—

At the sound of his voice the tigress dropped to a crouch. Her tail lashed her sides. I could not take my eyes from the arena. My throat was dry. I was vaguely conscious that a man had pushed past me. It was Pudgy, the menagerie keeper.

For a scant second a lower crouch—a long-drawn snarl—then a voice spoke, quietly, sharply.

"Princess!"

At the sound of the keeper's voice, the tigress lifted her head ever so little, and her amber, black-rimmed eyes turned toward him.

"Princess!" he said again. "Keep back—steady, old girl!"

He had unfastened the front gate

of the arena and opened it. He was unarmed; he carried not so much as a whip. Yet he went toward her quietly, talking in a gentle monotone, and she snarled at him as he came. But he walked quickly, confidently. He placed himself between the two men and the crouching tigress. Then he planted his feet far apart and smiled down at her.

"Maybe you're mad at these folks, but you wouldn't be mad at me—your old pal," he said softly.

There was a moment of sickening suspense. Then the snarl died on Princess's lips, her tail ceased its frenzied lashing, and she rose from her crouching position.

"The danger is over," Pudgy said quietly to the men behind him. "Just move out toward the door. Take your time. Don't run."

Then he spoke to the tigress again:

"Into your cage, old girl, right out through the same door you came in—Out you go—It's all right, lady—Don't be frightened—You know your old pal wouldn't do anything to hurt you—"

He was stepping forward toward her, urging her gently but firmly back through the side gate of the enclosure. She snarled as she went, and stopped once to roar full-throated defiance. But the mild little man talked to her always, caressing her with his voice, comforting her with the assurance that she was not to be hurt. The tawny body slipped through the door into the wagon cage—the door clanged after her—it was over.

Pudgy came out of the arena at the gate where he had entered. His face was calm, his hands untrembling. I pushed past the people in front of me and in a moment was beside him.

"Tell them, oh, tell them now!" I

whispered. And Pudgy, because he, too, loved the things of the wild, understood me.

"Do you think it would do any good?" he questioned under his breath, and I nodded, being almost past speech.

Together we sought the director of the picture. He was one of the Powers. His word would mean much.

He was still white-lipped and breathless, but he attempted a wan smile as he shook Pudgy's hand.

"Well, she almost got us," he spoke with forced cheerfulness. "If it hadn't been for you—" He shuddered in spite of himself. "If there's anything I can do, old man, to show my gratitude—"

Pudgy's eyes turned toward the wagon cage where Princess had commenced her endless pacing. She was still snarling softly, as if dreaming of the vengeance on man which had almost been hers.

"Maybe you don't know it," he said slowly, "but the real reason Princess obeyed me was because she knows me and likes me. She knows I like her, too, and she wouldn't do anything to make me feel bad. And if you really mean what you say—about doing something—why, let Princess live. She—she's a friend of mine."

There was a short silence. The director was staring at him curiously.

"That tiger—that bloodthirsty beast—a *friend* of yours?" he said incredulously.

"Yes," answered Pudgy simply. "She's just that, and I don't want her killed."

The director turned away, walked a few short steps, and halted. "All right," he said briefly, "if that's the way of it—I'll see what I can do."

As I said before, this is not my story. I wish it were. I should love to have

the friendship of that wonderful tigress as Pudgy has it. But at least I always make it a point, when at the studio, to pay a brief visit to Princess, the Royal Bengal. She paces unceasingly and stares at something beyond the bars which humans may not see. But because Pudgy has let me come inside the railing, and has told Princess that I helped, a very little bit, in obtaining her reprieve from the death sentence, I like to think that her amber eyes as they rest on me are not fierce, but kindly, and that she knows that I love her and wish her well.

Part Eleven

ETHEL OF THE WILD HEART

Part Eleven

For I saw her, not a savage, blood-thirsty beast, but a wild thing of the deep woods, ruled by pain instead of kindliness.

Part Eleven

ETHEL *of the* WILD HEART

HIS is the story of a lioness in a cage at a great moving-picture studio—a lean, tawny lioness with slanting, amber eyes and flexible muscles that undulated under the loose skin like ripples of water under a blanket of kelp.

They said, the people of the studio, that Ethel was savage, that she had clawed a trainer and injured an actor for life, that she hated women and would not tolerate the touch of a human hand. And they thought me a little mad when I wanted to go into the cage where she and four other lions were taking their exercise.

But I was of the press, so I was permitted to enter the cage with the trainer, to go through the doubled-barred iron doors, and to stand very quietly while the keeper of the lions, with a long whip, lashed the snarling animals to their pedestals.

Of them all, Ethel was the most savage. Her eyes blazed with a wicked light that burned green behind the amber; her tail lashed furiously when the trainer flicked her with his whip; and afraid as she undoubtedly was, the courage of her spirit showed itself in her stubborn crouch and the vicious striking of her powerful paws whenever the lash came near her.

She fascinated me. The other lions were cowed, it seemed, by long experience with the stinging whip. They took their places protesting and snarling, but with alacrity none the less. Ethel would not obey. In defiance of the

stern commands of the trainer and the leather thong which flicked remorselessly about her eyes and nose, she would leap from one side of the cage to the other, crouch for an instant, then spring again, shaking the bars in her frenzied attempts to escape the persecuting lash, while the other lions watched her from their pedestals uneasily, with guttural intakes of breath and occasional snarls.

Do you wonder what I felt when Ethel careened about the cage, stubborn, disobedient, mad with rage as well as with a terror born of pain? At first I felt fear, a fear as unreasoning as that of the lioness. For in one of her crazed leaps she brushed against me, so that I was pushed sharply against the iron bars of the cage.

"Do you want to go out?" the trainer was asking me, and I shook my head, for I could not speak.

Then suddenly the fear left me. The thread of ice which had seemed to run from the top of my head to the very soles of my feet melted away as though in a warm sunshine. For Ethel, crouching in snarling defiance, had suddenly raised her head. For an instant we measured each other, eye to eye. And in that moment I remembered another wild thing—this one uncaged—and I remembered myself a little girl alone on the Hill Trail, facing the amber eyes of one of Ethel's distant kin. I want to tell you what I remembered, so that you will know why the ice thread was melted and why things happened in that barred cage that the trainer said had never happened before.

It was while we still lived in the little cabin on the Bay, and I was yet a child. Brother had gone away to school, and I was lonely, so more than ever I sought

the woods and the companionship of the woods creatures there.

It was a sultry day in August when the juncoes were flying in panicky flocks, and when a haze of smoke was in the air that told of forest fires not so far away. All the night before the sky in the west had been reddened with a dull glow that gradually grew brighter, and though we had no fear for ourselves since a cleared space lay between the wooded hills and the cabin we were sorry for the wild things of the woods who would be forced to flee from the red monster that devoured their homes so relentlessly.

The air that day was oppressive, for the smoke hung low, and if we listened carefully, we could hear the distant crackling of tall pines with gum-smeared trunks on fire, and the occasional crash of a giant fir, tortured too long by licking flames.

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I sought the Hill Trail, listening, as I climbed, to the ominous crackle of burning trees, much nearer than I would have wished. And perhaps it was because of that intentness that I came, without realizing it, face to face with a wildcat, the largest I have ever seen, stretched across the trail, only a few feet in front of me.

For the first time in my life I knew the fear of which men and books tell you. Many had been the stories told by hunters who passed the cabin, of the ferocity of mountain lions and wildcats, although none of them had ever been seen in the woods around us, because civilization was too near. These beasts, said the hunters, kept to the higher hills and the deeper wooded forests, where game abounded and men seldom came. So when I saw the tawny animal so close that one light spring would have carried the powerful body upon

me, my first impulse was to run—blindly, madly—to run until I could run no more, or until the fierce claws of the great cat should bear me to the ground—

The wildcat had not moved except to lift its head ever so slightly and to draw back its jowls in a hissing snarl that displayed cruel, white fangs. The amber eyes watched me without flickering, yet in them I saw distrust, startled anger, and ever so little of a desire to spring—to kill—

In that one instant I had many thoughts—dizzy, rambling thoughts, that chased themselves across my mind like dried leaves blown by a wind. I noticed the straight, white whiskers on either side of the wildcat's nostrils; I heard the distant fall of a tree; I saw a grasshopper leap from a blade of grass that was bending under his weight; I heard the scuttle of leaves

somewhere in the woods and knew that a bevy of quail was there. But I could not move. I stood still in the grip of that numb terror.

What would have happened I can not say. Suddenly the fear left me—for I *knew!* I knew that the tawny animal before me was a wild thing of the woods even as were the other wild things I loved. I knew that fear of fire had driven him from his familiar haunts far up in the mountains, that he sought these woods for protection, not for killing, and I knew that I, having been in those woods longer than he, was hostess there, and that it was my place to make him welcome, to extend to him the friendly greetings that I would have tendered to any of my woods friends. The fear was gone, utterly. I wanted to put my hand on his sleek head, to stroke his glossy back, to put my cheek against the russet satin of his thick coat.

But I made no move. I spoke to him, as I would have spoken to any other of my woods friends, telling him that he was welcome, that the woods were his as well as mine, and that I hoped the fire would spare his relatives who were dear to him.

As I spoke, the amber eyes opened wider, the snarl died away, and suddenly he yawned, voluminously, with a snap of his jaws and a careless licking motion of his red tongue. Then his eyes closed indifferently, and I knew he had understood me. I knew that between us was no thought of fear or hate. I walked past him up the trail, so close that I might have touched him, and he did not move. Only the amber eyes met mine squarely, and it was as if the wild thing from the deeper woods had said with words,

"We are friends—go in peace."

When I had gone up the trail a way,

I stopped at the bend in the path and looked back. The wildcat was in the same position, but he was watching me still with eyes unblinking and unafraid.

So that is why, some years later, when Ethel raised her head and met my eyes, the icy fear slipped away. For I saw her, not a savage, bloodthirsty beast, but a wild thing of the deep woods, girded round with iron bars and stinging whips, a wild thing ruled by pain instead of kindliness, and there surged into my heart a great love and pity for her. I wanted to take the whip from the man, to break it into bits, to tell her that she was free to go back to her mountain fastnesses.

So, disregarding the cry of warning from the trainer and the gasps from those who stood outside the cage, I walked slowly toward the crouching lioness, saying to her the things I would have said had I met her in the

woods, telling her that I, too, belonged to the out-of-doors, that I, too, was a captive, that between us there was a bond. Slowly the snarling lips relaxed, the glint of green went out of her slanting eyes, and she no longer crouched. I knelt beside her on the floor of the cage, while the lions above on their pedestals watched with curious, sullen eyes, and the trainer's voice died away in a series of gulps. Gently I put out my hand and touched her rough, tawny head. She flinched and snarled, but I did not draw my hand away, and the next instant I felt her tense muscles relax, and she was quiet under the steady stroking of my hand.

The trainer spoke to me in an agonized whisper, telling me to come away quickly, and as I rose from my kneeling position, Ethel rose, too. Padding over to the pedestal which was hers, she mounted to it with a

spring and sat there quietly, her eyes never leaving me or missing a motion I made.

When we left the cage, Ethel padded close to my side, and the trainer said in jest that I might take her for a pet.

If I only could have! My heart was aching for her as I left, for I, too, am sometimes rebellious at the ways of civilization and of a world that does not know or care about the things of life that have nothing to do with money. I, too, am lonely for the freshness of leaves wet with dew, the feeling of moss underfoot, the glint of sunlight through laced branches. I think I know a little of the longing that is hers as she paces back and forth in her narrow cage, for hers is not a savage heart—only a wild heart; and I know that love can speak to it and soothe its hurt.

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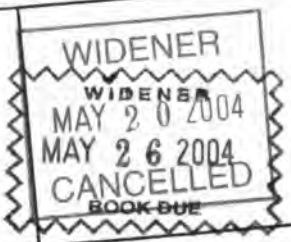

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